1 **Title: Defining gestational thyroid dysfunction through modified non-pregnancy reference intervals: an**

2 **individual participant meta-analysis**

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14   **Abstract**

15   Background: Establishing local trimester-specific reference intervals for gestational TSH and FT4 is often

16   not feasible, necessitating alternative strategies. We aimed to systematically quantify the diagnostic

17   performance of standardized modifications of center-specific non-pregnancy reference intervals as

18   compared to trimester-specific reference intervals.

19   Methods: We included prospective cohorts participating in the Consortium on Thyroid and Pregnancy.

20   After relevant exclusions, reference intervals were calculated per cohort in thyroperoxidase antibody-

21   negative women. Modifications to the non-pregnancy reference intervals included an absolute

22   modification (per 0.1 mU/L TSH or 1 pmol/L FT4), relative modification (in steps of 5%) and fixed limits

23   (upper TSH limit between 3.0 to 4.5 mU/L and lower FT4 limit 5-15 pmol/L). We compared (sub)clinical

3

1 hypothyroidism prevalence, sensitivity and positive predictive value (PPV) of aforementioned

2 methodologies with population-based trimester-specific reference intervals.

3 Results: The final study population comprised 52,496 participants in 18 cohorts. Optimal modifications

4 of standard reference intervals to diagnose gestational overt hypothyroidism were -5% for the upper

5 limit of TSH and +5% for the lower limit of FT4 (sensitivity 0.70, confidence interval [CI] 0.47-0.86; PPV

6 0.64, CI 0.54-0.74). For subclinical hypothyroidism, these were -20% for the upper limit of TSH and -15%

7 for the lower limit of FT4 (sensitivity 0.91, CI 0.67-0.98; PPV 0.71, CI 0.58-0.80). Absolute and fixed

8 modifications yielded similar results. Confidence intervals were wide, limiting generalizability.

9 Conclusion: We could not identify modifications of non-pregnancy TSH and FT4 reference intervals that

10 would enable centers to adequately approximate trimester-specific reference intervals. Future efforts

11 should be turned towards studying the meaningfulness of trimester-specific reference intervals and risk-

12 based decision limits.

13

14 **Introduction**

15 Thyroid dysfunction during pregnancy is associated with a higher risk of miscarriage, preeclampsia,

16 preterm birth, aberrant birthweight and lower offspring IQ [1-6]. Current international guidelines

17 recommend defining gestational thyroid dysfunction according to population and pregnancy-specific

18 TSH and FT4 reference intervals, to take into account thyroid physiology during pregnancy, as well as

19 differences in TSH and FT4 determinants between populations and the use of different laboratory assays

20 [7-9]. However, calculating such local reference intervals is generally not feasible for most centers [10,11]. In

21 addition to the practical hurdles, most of the published reference intervals for TSH and FT4 are not in

22 accordance with the current ATA guidelines, as we recently showed by providing an overview of

4

1 published TSH and FT4 reference intervals and methodologies, showing that most studies included used

2 additional exclusion criteria based on health status, did not exclude TPOAb positive participants or used

3 different percentile cutoffs [8]. This is in part because of changing guidelines and in part because many

4 centers use additional exclusion criteria or apply different reference limit cut-offs [8]. These varying

5 methodologies hamper the adoption of reference intervals from other centers, and as such, the vast

6 majority of centers rely on non-pregnancy reference intervals for TSH with either a fixed limit approach

7 (upper limit of 4.0 mU/L for TSH) or a subtraction approach (subtraction of 0.5 mU/L of the upper limit

8 of TSH), while for FT4 varying local approaches are used including non-pregnancy reference intervals [12-

9 14]. These second-tier strategies are considered inferior compared to locally defined reference intervals

10 [15-17]. In a follow-up study, we showed that the use of a fixed upper TSH limit or the subtraction approach

11 results in poor detection rates and high false positive rates for (subclinical) hypothyroidism in early

12 pregnancy with highly variable diagnostic performance between populations (sensitivity 0.63-0.82, false

13 discovery rate 0.11-0.35) [18].

14 In search of a method that is both easy to implement in clinical practice and would better identify

15 women with an abnormal thyroid function during pregnancy, we set out to investigate if it is possible to

16 modify the center-specific non-pregnancy TSH and FT4 reference intervals so that these are useful in

17 pregnancy. Such an approach could make the establishment of local pregnancy-specific reference

18 intervals obsolete while it takes account of the local assay and pre-existing laboratory harmonization

19 efforts [19,20]. A useful diagnostic approach would need to fulfill some conditions: 1) the diagnostic

20 performance should at least perform better than currently recommended alternative methods (TSH

21 upper limit of 4.0 mU/L or subtraction of 0.5 mU/L) [12,13], and 2) the diagnostic performance should be

22 reasonably consistent between populations.

1 In this individual participant meta-analysis, we aimed to modify the center-specific non-pregnancy

2 reference intervals of TSH and FT4 in a standardized manner and study the sensitivity and the positive

3 predictive value (PPV) as compared to center-specific gestational reference intervals as calculated in

4 accordance with the current international guidelines.

5

6 **Methods**

7 The study inclusion and eligibility procedures are described in detail previously [18]. In short, eligible

8 studies were those participating in the Consortium on Thyroid and Pregnancy

9 (https://www.consortiumthyroidpregnancy.org). Exclusion criteria for participants were pre-pregnancy

10 thyroid disease, pregnancy through in-vitro fertilization/ intracytoplasmic sperm injection (IVF/ICSI), use

11 of thyroid (interfering) medication and multiple gestation. For this study, we followed the Preferred

12 Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines for Individual Patient Data and

13 preregistered the study protocol (CRD42021270078), which can be found in the supplemental materials

14 along with an outline of protocol deviations [21]. Study quality and risk of bias were assessed using the

15 Newcastle-Ottawa scale (Supplemental materials [21]). All cohorts were approved by a local review board

16 and acquired participant informed consent or had been granted exemption from it by the local Ethics

17 Committee.

18 Defining gestational thyroid dysfunction

19 Non-pregnancy reference intervals were either published and/or provided by the principal investigator

20 of the included cohorts and are assay-specific. We defined the trimesters as 0 to 13 weeks, >13 to 27

21 weeks and >27 weeks of gestation. For cohorts containing participants with repeated measurements, we

22 used the first available sample for each trimester.

1   Reference intervals, thyroid dysfunction (overt and subclinical hypothyroidism) and diagnostic test

2   properties were calculated separately for each cohort to account for inter-population differences. All

3   reference intervals were calculated as the 2.5th to 97.5th percentiles in TPOAb-negative participants. Our

4   primary aim was to optimize the diagnosis of thyroid dysfunction states for which treatment is indicated

5   or should be considered based on current guidelines, and thus we limited analyses to overt and

6   subclinical hypothyroidism [13]. A treatment indication was defined as either 1) overt hypothyroidism, 2)

7   subclinical hypothyroidism with TSH>10 mU/L or 3) subclinical hypothyroidism with TPOAb positivity. A

8   treatment consideration was defined as 1) TSH between 2.5 mU/L and the upper reference limit with

9   concomitant TPOAb positivity or 2) subclinical hypothyroidism without TPOAb positivity [13]. Treatment of

10   hyperthyroidism was outside the scope of this study, since gestational hyperthyroidism is often

11   considered physiological and we do not have data available to differentiate between gestational

12   transient thyrotoxicosis and Graves' hyperthyroidism[13]. The prevalence of thyroid dysfunction and

13   diagnostic performance measures were calculated according to several methods; 1) a relative

14   modification of the non-pregnancy upper limit of TSH varying from -5% to -40% in steps of 5%, with

15   modifications to the lower limit of FT4 varying from -20% to +20% in steps of 5% (relative modification

16   approach); 2) a subtraction from the non-pregnancy upper limit of TSH varying from -0.1 to -1.0 mU/L,

17   with modification of the non-pregnancy lower limit of FT4 varying from -5 to +5 pmol/L (-0.39 to +0.39

18   ng/dL; absolute modification approach) and 3) using fixed upper limits for TSH, varying from 3.0 to 4.5

19   mU/L, and fixed lower limits for FT4, varying from 5-15 pmol/L (0.39-1.17 ng/dL; fixed limit approach).

20   The choice for the range of modifications was based on previous recommendations (e.g. the fixed upper

21   limit of 4.0mU/L for TSH and 0.5 subtraction from this limit) and the optimal diagnostic performance in

22   this study, to keep the results organized. The results for each method were compared to the reference

23   standard (trimester-specific reference intervals), as is currently advised in international guidelines [12,13].

24

1   Diagnostic performance measures

2   The diagnostic performance of each assessed combination is described using the sensitivity (equivalent

3   to true positive rate, true positive rate among all with the disease according to the trimester-specific

4   method) and the PPV (equivalent to 1-false discovery rate, true positives among all with a positive test

5   result). Presenting the PPV, rather than the specificity, was preferred since the PPV is more informative

6   with regard to false positives for outcomes with a low prevalence [22]. The aim was to maximize both

7   diagnostic performance markers, which poses a challenge, since maximizing sensitivity and the PPV is

8   often a trade-off.

9   The primary outcome was a single diagnostic performance measure, the F-score (also referred to as F1-

10   score), which is a combined measure of PPV (also referred to as 'precision') and sensitivity (also referred

11   to as 'recall') [23]. A higher F-score denotes a better overall diagnostic performance.

12   Prediction intervals and the I^2 statistic are presented to illustrate the expected inter-population variation

13   in diagnostic performance and between-study heterogeneity [21,24]. Prediction intervals are an attempt to

14   predict future individual values whereas confidence intervals give an indication of where the mean value

15   lies. To facilitate comparison of diagnostic performance markers between methods, interactive

16   heatmaps were constructed which can be found online [25].

17   Statistical analyses

18   Diagnostic performance measures were calculated using 2x2 contingency tables (confusion matrices)

19   per cohort and pooled using random intercept logistic regression models utilizing maximum likelihood

20   for modeling between-study heterogeneity. This approach was chosen since it outperforms

21   conventional two-step inverse-variance approaches for sparse event datasets [26,27]. For each alternative

22   approach, the sensitivity, PPV and F-scores were calculated and compared with the trimester-specific

8

1 approach. All analyses were performed using R statistical software version 4.2.2 [28], specifically using the

2 package 'meta' [29], 'ggplot2' [30] and 'heatmaply' [31].

3

4 **Results**

5 After exclusions, the final study population comprised 52,496 participants included in 18 cohorts (Figure

6 1) of whom 8.6% were TPOAb positive (range across cohorts 5.7-17.1%; Supplemental table 1 [21]). The

7 prevalence of thyroid function test abnormalities (in the first and second trimester, respectively)

8 according to the trimester-specific approach was 0.5% and 0.3% for overt hypothyroidism and 3.4% and

9 3.2% for subclinical hypothyroidism. The inclusion process and maternal demographics are described in

10 detail previously [18]. Cohort-specific prevalence of thyroid disease, reference limits, iodine status and

11 assay information can be found in Supplemental tables 2-6 [21]. All figures are accompanied by

12 supplemental tables [21] containing the diagnostic performance markers for each specific combination

13 (Figure 2 is an explanatory example of the diagnostic markers presented). To facilitate comparison of

14 diagnostic performance measures, an interactive version of the heatmaps including other diagnostic

15 performance measures can be found online and is also referred to throughout, as an alternative to the

16 supplemental tables [21] (https://www.consortiumthyroidpregnancy.org/heatmaps [25]).

17 Diagnostic performance of alternative approaches

18 Using the relative modification approach in the first trimester, the highest F-scores for overt

19 hypothyroidism were achieved with a relative subtraction of 5% for the upper reference limit of TSH and

20 a relative addition of 5% for the lower reference limit of FT4 (F-score 0.65; Figure 3A). The associated

21 sensitivity was 0.70 (95% confidence interval [CI] 0.47-0.86; 95% prediction interval [PI] 0.06-0.99; I^2

22 64%), and the PPV was 0.64 (CI 0.54-0.74; PI 0.18-0.94; I^2 45%; Figure 3A, Supplemental table 7 [21],

23 Interactive figures [25]). For subclinical hypothyroidism the highest F-scores were achieved with a relative

9

1 subtraction of 20% for the upper reference limit of TSH and a relative subtraction of 15% for the lower

2 reference limit of FT4 (F-score 0.69; Figure 3B). Associated sensitivity was 0.91 (CI 0.67-0.98; PI 0.02-

3 1.00; I^2 95%) and PPV was 0.71 (CI 0.58-0.80; PI 0.20-0.96; I^2 95%; Supplemental table 8 [21], Interactive

4 figures [25]).

5 Using the absolute modification approach in the first trimester, the highest F-scores for overt

6 hypothyroidism were achieved with a subtraction of either -0.1, -0.2 or -0.3 mU/L for the upper limit of

7 TSH and an addition of +1 pmol/L to the lower limit of FT4 and (F-score 0.62; Figure 3C). Associated

8 sensitivity (for upper limit TSH -0.2 mU/L) was 0.74 (CI 0.52-0.89; PI 0.08-0.99; I^2 66%) and PPV was 0.57

9 (CI 0.45-0.68; PI 0.24-0.84; I^2 39%; Supplemental table 9 [21], Interactive figures [25]). For subclinical

10 hypothyroidism the highest F-scores were achieved with a subtraction of -0.8 mU/L from the upper limit

11 of TSH and a subtraction of either -1, -2, -3, -4 or -5 pmol/L from the lower limit of FT4 (F-score 0.64;

12 Figure 3D). Associated sensitivity (for lower limit FT4 -4 pmol/L) was 0.91 (CI 0.61-0.98; PI 0.01-1.00; I^2

13 95%) and PPV was 0.68 (CI 0.55-0.78; PI 0.20-0.95; I^2 95%; Supplemental table 10 [21], Interactive figures

14 [25]).

15 Using the fixed limit approach in the first trimester, the highest F-scores for overt hypothyroidism were

16 achieved with an upper limit of TSH of either 3.8, 3.9, 4.0, 4.1 and 4.4 mU/L and a lower limit of FT4 of

17 12 pmol/L (F-score 0.65; Figure 3E). Associated sensitivity (for upper limit TSH 4.0 mU/L) was 0.83 (CI

18 0.70-0.91; PI 0.41-0.97; I^2 0%) and PPV was 0.50 (CI0.32-0.68; PI 0.05-0.95; I^2 70%; Supplemental table

19 11 [21], Interactive figures [25]). For subclinical hypothyroidism the highest F- were achieved with an upper

20 limit of TSH of 3.2 mU/L and a lower limit of FT4 of either 5, 6, 7 or 8 pmol/L (F-score 0.70; Figure 3F).

21 Associated sensitivity (for lower limit FT4 8 pmol/L) was 0.99 (CI 0.88-1.00; PI 0.03-1.00; I^2 91%) and PPV

22 was 0.66 (CI 0.51-0.79; PI 0.11-0.97; I^2 96%; Supplemental table 12 [21], Interactive figures [25]).

23 Additional analyses

1   In the second trimester, maximum F-scores were similar for the relative modification method, the

2   absolute modification approach and the fixed limit approach (Supplemental figure 1A-F [21]). However,

3   comparing the diagnostic performance measures of individual studies, the variability between studies

4   was very high, as reflected by overlapping confidence intervals for all methods, based on the wide

5   prediction intervals and based on high I^2 statistics for higher F-scores (Supplemental tables 13-18 [21]). The

6   diagnostic performance of alternative methods to detect women for whom levothyroxine treatment is

7   indicated and those for whom treatment should be considered, according to ATA guidelines, in the first

8   trimester and second trimester were similar based on overlapping confidence intervals (Supplemental

9   figures 2, 3; Supplemental tables 19-30 [21]).

10   **Discussion**

11   In this study, we systematically evaluated multiple standardized procedures to modify non-pregnancy

12   TSH and FT4 reference intervals with the aim of diagnosing the same individuals as having an abnormal

13   gestational thyroid function in line with the 'gold-standard' approach of center-specific and trimester-

14   specific reference intervals. Despite our efforts, we were unable to identify a standardized procedure

15   that achieved a satisfactory balance between sensitivity and PPV for gestational thyroid dysfunction

16   without considerable variability across different populations. These results underscore the inherent

17   challenge in balancing precise identification of gestational thyroid dysfunction with the practical

18   limitations of applying these diagnostic strategies universally in clinical settings, and indicate that

19   calculating local center and pregnancy-specific reference intervals for TSH and FT4 should still be

20   considered as current best practice.

21   Current recommendations on gestational reference interval definitions for TSH and FT4 are time and

22   resource consuming and are not feasible for most centers worldwide. The modification of non-

23   pregnancy reference intervals for the use in pregnancy could overcome feasibility problems. However, in

1   the current study we show that the variability in TSH and FT4 distributions leads to unacceptable

2   variation in diagnostic performance between cohorts. A possible explanation for this variation is that

3   even the non-pregnancy TSH and FT4 reference intervals are not an adequate reflection of the

4   distribution of thyroid function tests for a population if they are based on the manufacturer's

5   recommendation rather than local laboratory-specific establishment of the intervals. Methods for

6   determining reference intervals in pregnancy and outside pregnancy often differ, as current

7   recommendations on the establishment of reference limits in pregnancy include the local population

8   and are by definition a reflection of local TSH and FT4 distributions [12-14], while reference limits outside

9   pregnancy are often supplied by the assay manufacturer, who mostly established reference intervals in

10   selected, non-pregnant populations [32,33]. Global harmonization efforts for TSH and FT4 assays by the

11   International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) Committee for

12   Standardization of Thyroid Function Tests (C-STFT) are ongoing to address this issue outside of

13   pregnancy, which could lead to an attenuation of this mismatch [19,20].

14   We also show that for overt hypothyroidism and for subclinical hypothyroidism, different and

15   sometimes opposing modifications of the reference limits of TSH and FT4 were needed to achieve

16   maximum diagnostic performance. For instance, when reviewing the relative modifications needed to

17   achieve the best diagnostic performance for overt hypothyroidism in the first trimester, we find that the

18   best F-score of 0.65 is achieved with the upper limit of TSH -5% and the lower limit of FT4 +5% (Figure

19   2A) while the best F-score for subclinical hypothyroidism of 0.69 is achieved with the upper limit of TSH -

20   20% and the lower limit of FT4 -15% (Figure 2B). We previously showed that the use of trimester-specific

21   reference intervals for FT4 are most important for the correct diagnosis of overt hypothyroidism while

22   for subclinical hypothyroidism the use of trimester-specific reference intervals for TSH are more

23   important[18], which could explain the current results. This finding suggests that a uniform rule

24   established to diagnose both overt and subclinical disease, would be good at diagnosing one, at the cost

12

1   of incorrectly diagnosing the other. We also observe that the trends in diagnostic performance for a

2   treatment indication (Supplemental figure 2A, 2C, 2E [21]) mostly overlap with the trend in diagnostic

3   performance for subclinical hypothyroidism (Figure 2B, 2D, 2F). This is because most women with a

4   treatment indication present with subclinical hypothyroidism with TPOAb positivity (73.6%) rather than

5   overt hypothyroidism (25.4%) or subclinical hypothyroidism with TSH>10 (1.1%; data not shown). Since

6   the prevalence of subclinical hypothyroidism is much higher than of overt hypothyroidism, it can be

7   expected that the best diagnostic performance of a test to detect a treatment indication is reached with

8   the same modifications as for subclinical hypothyroidism. This concept is important for future

9   recommendations on universal reference limits because diagnosing overt hypothyroidism, an entity with

10   an evident treatment indication, is generally prioritized in diagnostic strategies for gestational thyroid

11   dysfunction. However, failing to identify the more prevalent subclinical disease could also lead to

12   decreased benefits of (selective) screening. While we found no method with an agreeable trade-off in

13   terms of diagnostic performance, it is important to realize that the interpretation of diagnostic

14   performance of a test depends on the prior probability of disease [34]. This is a highly relevant concept

15   when thinking about differences between generalized population screening (with a low prior

16   probability) versus high-risk case-based screening (with higher prior probabilities). For example, for a

17   hypothetical diagnostic test with a sensitivity of 0.75 and a specificity of 0.99 (roughly equal to the tests

18   assessed in our study), a pre-test probability of 3% would result in a post-positive test probability (or

19   PPV) of 70% and a false discovery rate of 30%. Using the same sensitivity and specificity, a pre-test

20   probability of 10% would results in a post-positive test probability of 89% with a false discovery rate of

21   11%. The current study population consists of population-based cohort studies as a reflection of the

22   general population, which have a low prior probability of disease equal to the population prevalence

23   and similar to a universal screening approach. One option to improve how alternative reference interval

24   strategies could identify those with an abnormal thyroid function would be to increase the prior

13

1   probability of disease [34]. This can be achieved by optimizing the identification of high-risk subgroups and

2   a risk-based screening approach, which could improve the accuracy of diagnostic strategies [35]. Thus, the

3   implementation of universal screening will be inherently associated with the lowest prior probability of

4   disease and the highest rates of both over and underdiagnosis, especially if alternative strategies are

5   used to define thyroid function test abnormalities.

6   The heterogeneity between populations (as denoted by wide prediction intervals and high I^2 statistics)

7   underline that calculating local center and pregnancy specific reference intervals for TSH and FT4 should

8   still be considered as current best practice. However, other strategies for the improvement of the

9   diagnosis of gestational thyroid dysfunction might prove more effective. The trimester-specific approach

10 is currently accepted as the best diagnostic method for diagnosing thyroid dysfunction in pregnancy, but

11 the pragmatic division of the gestational period in trimesters does not necessarily reflect the

12 physiological changes of thyroid function tests during pregnancy [36-38]. Further studies are needed to

13 assess which gestational period reference intervals should be based upon to optimally identify the

14 women at increased risk of adverse events due to thyroid dysfunction, or if any form of standardization

15 to gestational age should be abandoned altogether. Current reference interval definitions are based on

16 outlying percentiles of TSH and FT4 distributions (2.5th and 97.5th percentiles), values above or below

17 those cutoffs were later shown to be associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes [39]. With increasing

18 data availability in the literature, the ideal way to establish reference values would be to turn this

19 methodology around and base the cut-offs on the risk of adverse outcomes, similar to other fields [40,41].

20 Obvious adverse pregnancy events would be those associated with thyroid function tests in previous

21 studies such as preterm birth and offspring IQ scores [3,4,6]. Since we did not identify an adequate or easily

22 implementable methodology to approach trimester-specific reference intervals in the current study, our

23 group will aim to establish risk-based decision limits.

14

1 In this study, we were able to leverage a large international dataset of multiple population-based

2 prospective cohort studies to assess novel strategies for diagnosing thyroid dysfunction in pregnancy.

3 The interpretation of the results of this study are limited to populations with sufficient or mild-to-

4 moderate iodine deficiency since studies with excessive status were excluded and no studies were

5 performed in an area of severe iodine deficiency. Additionally, multiple differences between the

6 included study populations, including differences in iodine supplementation, assays and determinants of

7 thyroid function tests, could have contributed to the variability in diagnostic performance of the non-

8 pregnancy reference interval adaptations assessed in this study. Adaptations of non-pregnancy

9 reference limits could be more accurate in specific populations, which we were not able to assess with

10 sufficient power. Nonetheless, this study reflects common practice, as these factors naturally vary

11 between populations. The results of the current study may not be optimally generalizable to present-

12 day populations since the inclusion periods for the majority of included cohorts were between the year

13 2000 and 2015. It is likely that determinants of thyroid function and assay calibrations standards have

14 changed over time [42]. It can however be expected that large inter-population differences, as

15 demonstrated in this study, are still present to this day. Ongoing harmonization efforts by the IFCC could

16 improve the diagnostic performance of alternative strategies and future studies could assess if a

17 generalizable rule is more effective in cohorts established after the start of the harmonization efforts.

18 In conclusion, this is the first study to systematically quantify the diagnostic performance of

19 standardized modifications of non-pregnancy TSH and FT4 reference intervals in pregnancy. We show

20 that standardized modifications have poor overlap in diagnostic accuracy compared with cohort and

21 trimester-specific reference intervals, resulting in considerable variation in diagnostic performance

22 between populations. Future efforts should be turned towards studying the meaningfulness of

23 trimester-specific, pregnancy-specific reference intervals and the establishment of risk-based decision

24 limits.

15

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5 **Data availability**

6 The data that support the findings of this study are not publicly available due to local, national and

7 international restrictions aimed to protect the privacy of research participants.

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1   **Figure legends**

2   Figure 1 – Flowchart of included cohorts and participants

3   Figure 2 - Diagnostic performance of modified non-pregnancy reference invals for overt hypothyroidism

4   using relative modification

5   Figure 2 legend: Diagnostic performance for relative modifications of non-pregnancy reference intervals

6   for the diagnosis of overt hypothyroidism, presented as F-scores. The zoomed in section presents

7   additional diagnostic performance markers for selected modifications, of which an interactive version

8   can be found online (https://www.consortiumthyroidpregnancy.org/heatmaps).

9   Figure 3 – Diagnostic performance of modified non-pregnancy reference intervals for overt and

10   subclinical hypothyroidism

11   Figure 3 legend – Diagnostic performance of modified non-pregnancy reference intervals are presented

12   using a relative modification (A, B), absolute modifications (C, D) and fixed limits (E, F) for overt and

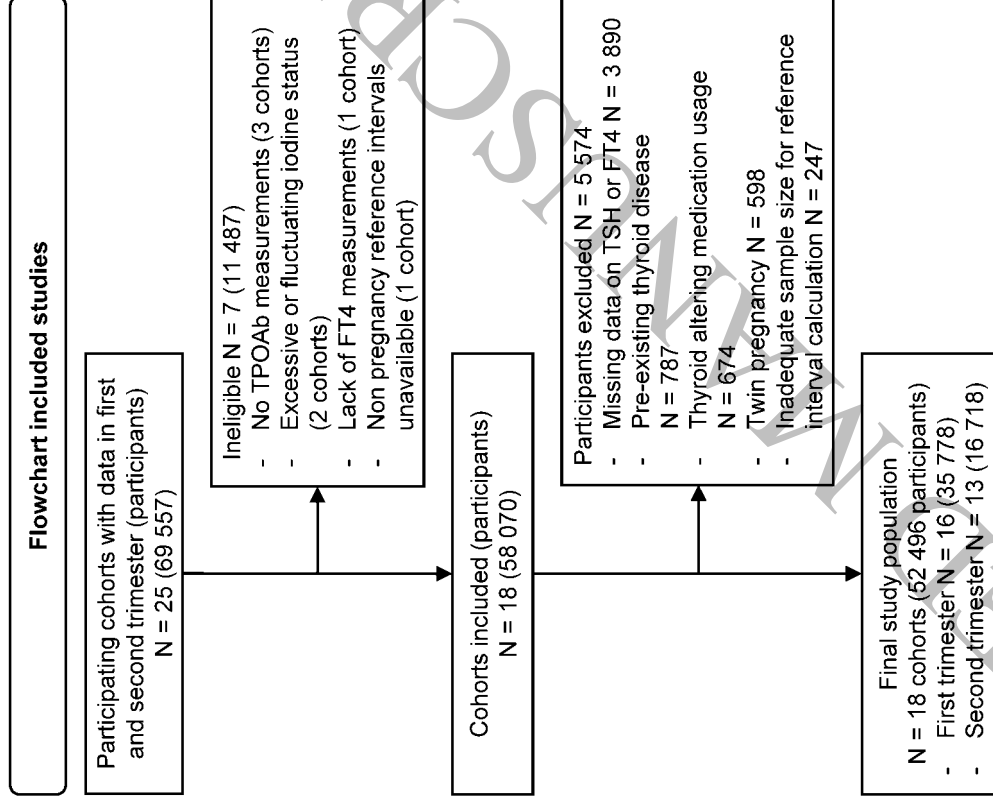13   subclinical hypothyroidism, respectively, of which an interactive version can be found online

14   (https://www.consortiumthyroidpregnancy.org/heatmaps).
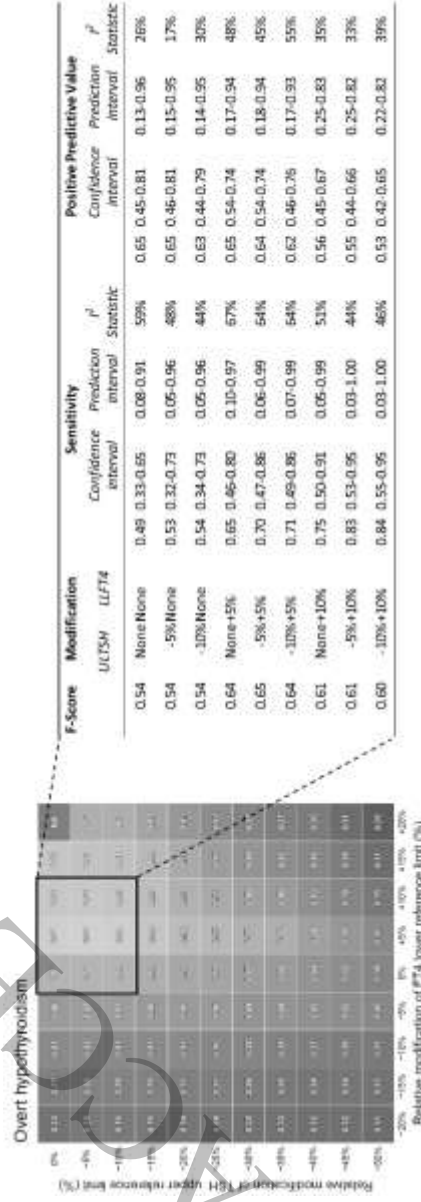
Flowchart included studies

Participating cohorts with data in first and second trimester (participants) N = 25 (69 557)

Ineligible N = 7 (11 487)
- No TPOAb measurements (3 cohorts)
- Excessive or fluctuating iodine status (2 cohorts)
- Lack of FT4 measurements (1 cohort)
- Non pregnancy reference intervals unavailable (1 cohort)

Cohorts included (participants) N = 18 (58 070)

Participants excluded N = 5 574
- Missing data on TSH or FT4 N = 3 890
- Pre-existing thyroid disease N = 787
- Thyroid altering medication usage N = 674
- Twin pregnancy N = 598
- Inadequate sample size for reference interval calculation N = 247

Final study population
N = 18 cohorts (52 496 participants)
- First trimester N = 16 (35 778)
- Second trimester N = 13 (16 718)

Figure 1
111x137 mm (x DPI)

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F-Score	Modification		Sensitivity			Positive Predictive Value		
	UCTSH	LLFT4	Confidence interval	Prediction interval	I² Statistic	Confidence interval	Prediction interval	I² Statistic
0.54	None	None	0.49 0.33-0.65	0.08-0.91	59%	0.65 0.45-0.81	0.13-0.96	26%
0.54	-5%	None	0.53 0.32-0.73	0.05-0.96	48%	0.65 0.46-0.81	0.15-0.95	17%
0.54	-10%	None	0.54 0.34-0.73	0.05-0.96	44%	0.63 0.44-0.79	0.14-0.95	30%
0.64	None	+5%	0.65 0.46-0.80	0.10-0.97	57%	0.65 0.54-0.74	0.17-0.94	48%
0.65	-5%	+5%	0.70 0.47-0.86	0.06-0.99	54%	0.64 0.54-0.74	0.18-0.94	45%
0.64	-10%	+5%	0.71 0.49-0.86	0.07-0.99	54%	0.62 0.46-0.76	0.17-0.93	55%
0.61	None	+10%	0.75 0.50-0.91	0.05-0.99	51%	0.56 0.45-0.67	0.25-0.83	35%
0.61	-5%	+10%	0.83 0.53-0.95	0.03-1.00	44%	0.55 0.44-0.66	0.25-0.82	33%
0.60	-10%	+10%	0.84 0.55-0.95	0.03-1.00	46%	0.53 0.42-0.65	0.22-0.82	39%

Overt hypothyroidism

Relative modification of FT4 lower reference limit (%)

Relative modification of TSH upper reference limit (%)

Figure 2
313x107 mm (x DPI)

5
6
7

Figure 3
328x559 mm (x DPI)