

## Thyroglobulin and recurrence of thyroid cancer

**To the Editor:** I read the recent article<sup>1</sup> on the relationship between thyroglobulin and recurrence of thyroid cancer with great interest. Papageorgiou *et al.* concluded that 'Although low, a cut-off Tg level of 1.3 ng/ml represents a simple indication for further investigation in patients receiving thyroxine after completion of treatment for thyroid cancer, in the absence of measurement of anti-Tg auto-antibodies'.<sup>1</sup> This finding is interesting and contrasts with the previous report that measuring only thyroglobulin could be unreliable without concomitant measurement of anti-Tg.<sup>2</sup> Before reaching this conclusion, some issues should be considered: (i) the quality control of the laboratory measurement; and (ii) one should also note that there is a difference in measured thyroglobulin levels if different test assays are used, and this can be a problem for generalisation in using the thyroglobulin test.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Papageorgiou MS, Liratzopoulos N, Minopoulos G, Manolas KJ. Thyroglobulin – what is the postoperative threshold for the suspicion of thyroid cancer recurrence in the absence of anti-Tg antibody measurement? *S Afr J Surg* 2011;49:118-122.
2. Hijiyanakis P, Mundy J, Harmer C. Thyroglobulin antibodies in differentiated thyroid cancer. *Clin Oncol (R Coll Radiol)* 1999;11(4):240-244.
3. Krahn J, Dembinski T. Thyroglobulin and anti-thyroglobulin assays in thyroid cancer monitoring. *Clin Biochem* 2009;42(4-5):416-419.