



# INSTRUCTIONS FOR RADIO IODINE THERAPY



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### WHAT IS RADIOACTIVE IODINE? (I-131) THERAPY AND HOW IS IT USED?

Radioactive Iodine I-131 therapy is a treatment for an overactive thyroid, a condition called hyperthyroidism. The thyroid is a gland in the neck that produces two hormones that regulate all aspects of the body's metabolism, the process of converting food into energy. When a thyroid gland is overactive, it produces too much of these hormones, accelerating the body's metabolism. Symptoms of this condition include an enlarged thyroid gland, rapid heart rate, high blood pressure, weight loss in spite of increased appetite and less tolerance for a warm environment.

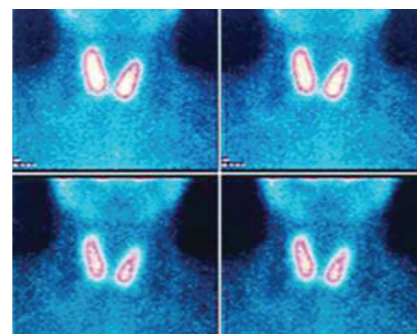
Radioactive Iodine (I-131) is an isotope created from iodine to emit radiation for medical use. When a small dose of I-131 is swallowed, it is absorbed into

the bloodstream in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract and concentrated from the blood by the thyroid gland, where it begins destroying the Thyroid cells. This treatment causes thyroid activity to slow considerably and, in some cases, may turn an overactive thyroid into an underactive thyroid requiring additional treatment. Radioactive iodine I-131 may also be used to treat Graves's disease, goiter, thyroid nodules and thyroid cancer.

### WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN THIS PROCEDURE?

A radiologist who has specialized training in nuclear medicine and others, possibly including an endocrinologist, oncologist, thyroid surgeon and radiation safety officer, will be part of your treatment team.

### IS THERE ANY SPECIAL PREPARATION OR FOLLOW-UP INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PROCEDURE?



You will be able to return home following radioactive iodine treatment, but you should avoid prolonged, close contact with other people for several days, particularly pregnant women and small children. Nearly all the radioactive iodine leaves the body during the first two days following the treatment, primarily through the urine. Small amounts will also be excreted in saliva, sweat, tears, vaginal secretions, and feces.

Please inform us of the medications you are taking, since you might need to stop certain thyroid medications & If you have Any recent CT scan performed. You will need to be fasting for 3 – 4 hours prior and 2 hours after the administration of oral Iodine medicine.

If your work or daily activities involve prolonged contact with small children or pregnant women, you will want to wait several days after your treatment to resume these activities. Patients with infants at home should arrange for care to be provided by another person for the first several days after treatment. Your treatment team will give you a list of other precautions to take following your treatment with I-131. Patients who need to travel immediately after radioactive iodine treatment are advised to carry a letter of explanation from their physician.

Radiation detection devices used at airports and government buildings may be sensitive to the radiation levels present. Patients up to three months following treatment with I-131

### THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Use private toilet facilities, if possible; and flush twice after each use.
- Bathe daily and wash hands frequently
- Drink normal amount of fluids.
- Use disposable eating utensils or wash your utensils separately from others.
- Sleep alone and avoid prolonged intimate contact. Brief periods of close contact, such as handshaking and hugging, are permitted.
- Launder your linens, towels, and clothes daily at home, separately. No special cleaning of the washing machine is required between loads.
- Do not prepare food for others that requires prolonged handling with bare hands.

Radioiodine should never be used in a patient who is pregnant or nursing. I-131 given during pregnancy can damage the baby's thyroid gland. When given to a nursing mother, radioactive iodine can reach a baby through her breast milk. Most physicians feel that this procedure should not be used in women who are breast feeding who are unwilling to cease breast should be put off until at least six to 12 months after I-131 treatment, since the treatment exposes the ovaries to radiation. Women who have not yet reached menopause should fully discuss the use of I-131 with their physician.

### HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

Treatment for hyperthyroidism is almost always done on an outpatient basis because the dose required is relatively

small the Radioiodine I-131 is swallowed in a single dose, in capsule or liquid form, and is quickly absorbed. Although the Radioactive Iodine from this treatment remains in the thyroid for some time. It is greatly the gland that takes between one and three months to develop, with maximum benefit occurring three to six months after treatment.

### WHAT WILL I FEEL DURING THIS PROCEDURE?

It is common for patients to experience some pain in the thyroid after I-131 treatment for hyperthyroidism. You should ask your physician to recommend an over-the counter pain reliever to treat this pain.

### ARE THERE PERMANENT SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE PROCEDURE?

It is highly likely that the entire thyroid gland will be ablated with this procedure, curing the symptoms from the overactive thyroid gland. Since hormones produced by the thyroid are essential for metabolism, most patients will need to take thyroid pills for the rest of their life following the procedure. There are essentially no other permanent side effects from the procedure. There might be a second need for an additional dose of radioactive iodine, in a small percentage of patients.

### LOW IODINE DIET GUIDELINES:

Key points:

- This is a low-iodine diet, not a no-iodine diet or an iodine-free diet. The goal is under 50 mcg iodine per day.
- The diet is for a short time period, usually for the 2 weeks (14 days) before a radioactive iodine scan or treatment.
- Avoid foods high in iodine (over 20 mcg per serving). Eat any foods low in iodine

(up to 5 mcg per serving). Limit the quantity of foods moderate in iodine (5 to 20 mcg per serving).

- Read the ingredient lists on labels of packaged foods. Check with your physician about medications you're taking.

### NOT ALLOWED - AVOID THESE FOODS AND INGREDIENTS

- Iodized salt, sea salt, and any foods containing iodized salt and sea salt.
- Seafood and sea products (fish etc.)
- Dairy products of any kind (milk, cheese, yogurt, butter, ice cream).
- Egg yolks or whole eggs or foods containing whole eggs. Bakery products containing iodine/iodate dough conditioners or high-iodine ingredients.
- Chocolates.
- Soybeans and soybean products such as tofu, soy milk, Soy sauce.
- Iodine-containing vitamins and food supplements.
- If you're taking a medication containing iodine, check with your physician.