

Nuclear Medicine eConsult Patient Handouts

Iodine-131 Therapy

You have been scheduled for treatment with radioactive iodine. You will be given either a capsule of radioactive iodine or you may have to drink a small amount of liquid radioactive iodine through a straw, this will only take a few minutes.

Prior to the therapy your doctor will discuss radiation safety precautions following iodine therapy. These precautions vary considerably and depend on the dose of iodine you are being treated with and on the type of thyroid problem you have.

If you are female of childbearing years you may be asked to take a urine pregnancy before the treatment. **Pregnant women will not be treated. Breast-feeding must be discontinued after Iodine-131 therapy and patients are advised not to get pregnant for 6 months following the therapy.**

How to prepare:

- Please tell your doctor if you are taking any thyroid medications- these will interfere with the therapy.
- Your doctor may ask you to be on a low iodine diet for several weeks before the therapy - this will depend of the type of thyroid problem you have.
- On the day of your appointment please make sure you have nothing to eat for the **4 hours prior** to the therapy.
- Please do not bring young children or pregnant women with you to this appointment.
- The radioactive iodine has no immediate side effects and will not affect your ability to drive. Please come alone to this appointment if at all possible.
- Please wear loose comfortable clothing and minimal jewelry for the study.

If you are unable to keep your appointment please call to cancel. Give at least 24 hours notice when possible.

