

Iodine Therapy



**Patients must also read their appointment letter
and any enclosures carefully**

What is Iodine Therapy?

Iodine Therapy is a treatment which helps the way your thyroid gland functions. It involves swallowing a capsule containing radioactive iodine.

How do you prepare for this therapy?

You can eat and drink as normal; however it is important that you adhere to the instructions in your appointment letter with regards to medication. It is also important that you have read and understand the information sent to you or given to you by the specialist.

Females: Due to the radiation involved, there is a risk to an unborn or breastfeeding child. Therefore, it is important that you let us know in advance if you are or may be **pregnant** or **breastfeeding**. The specialist may ask you to bring a urine sample to your therapy appointment at the Nuclear Medicine Department so that it can be confirmed that you are not pregnant. This must be a recent urine sample (produced on the same day as your therapy).

Who can come with you for this therapy?

It is fine if you want someone to come with you on the day of the treatment. However, due to the radiation involved, please do not bring along a child or a pregnant woman.

Finding the Nuclear Medicine Department

The Nuclear Medicine Department is located in Zone C, Department C16.

How is the therapy performed?

On the day of the procedure, you will be given a capsule to swallow with some water. The capsule contains radioactive iodine which is used to treat the thyroid. It is a normal sized capsule. It will not make you feel any different. It can take four to six weeks for you to feel its benefits.

How will this therapy affect you?

The capsule should not immediately affect you in any way. The therapy will not affect your ability to drive home so it is not necessary for anyone to accompany you unless you so wish. For **seven days** after the therapy, all patients should sit on the toilet when passing urine.

Are there any risks from the radioactive iodine?

The radioactive iodine is used as sparingly as possible and the benefits of this therapy far outweigh the risk from the radiation.

Females: It is advisable to avoid pregnancy for **six months** following the treatment.

Males: It is advisable to avoid fathering children for **four months** following the treatment.

Will the radiation affect other people?

It is important that you follow the instructions in the information sheet that has been sent to you or given to you by the specialist (“Advice to patients receiving iodine-131 treatment”). This will make sure that the radiation to other people is as low as possible.

Travelling after your therapy

Some airports, seaports, train stations, bus stations and major sporting event venues have installed very sensitive radiation detectors. It is possible that these detectors may be triggered by the small amount of radioactivity remaining in your body following your treatment. Therefore, you will be given a Radiation Protection Certificate confirming the date of your therapy. It is recommended that you carry the certificate with you for **three months** following your treatment to show to officials if necessary.

Additional Information:

If you have any concerns or questions with regard to this procedure, or you need this information in another format such as larger print, please telephone the Nuclear Medicine Department on the phone number below:

Nuclear Medicine Department: 01225 824076