

RADIATION PRECAUTIONS

You will briefly become radioactive following the treatment. The radiation is similar to xrays. It's beneficial to you as part of the treatment, but not beneficial to others. The hospital stay is designed to limit unnecessary exposure to your family or members of the general public. Your body eliminates any Iodine that is not trapped in the thyroid through urine, saliva, sweat and bowel movements. Most of the radioactive iodine is gone after 2 days. You may need to follow precautions for up to 7 days after discharge to make sure you do not expose others unnecessarily. The technologist will give appropriate discharge instructions depending on the remaining activity level. Please inform staff if you plan to travel or cross the border.

Mission

St. Joseph's Health Centre is a Catholic community teaching hospital providing health care services that reflect the Gospel values of respect, dignity and compassion. We are committed to fostering a healthy community for all.



ST. JOSEPH'S
UNITY HEALTH TORONTO



Contact us for information.

A Team Based Approach

The Nuclear Medicine staff, endocrinologist, surgeon, nurses and dietitian work closely as a collaborative team to plan and implement your treatment, therapy and follow-up. The dosage is calculated based on the results from your surgery, blood work, and patient specific factors. Typical doses range between 30 millicuries and 100 millicuries. But it's common to have more.



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HIGH DOSE RADIOACTIVE
IODINE I-131 THERAPY

www.stjoestoronto.ca

I-131 THERAPY

I-131 is a radioactive isotope of Iodine used in the treatment of thyroid disease including thyroid cancer and hyperthyroidism.

You will receive radioactive iodine after your surgery to ablate any remaining papillary or follicular thyroid cancer cells or normal thyroid tissue that the surgeon could not remove. Ablation also aims to eliminate any thyroid cancer cells that may have spread to other parts of the body.

How long will I stay in the hospital?

Therapies are administered on Wednesdays or Fridays. Most patients are discharged after 2 or 3 days. Most of the radiation is eliminated from your system within the 48 hrs. The remaining level will be measured before you leave and you will be given appropriate discharge instructions. Most patients leave with no restrictions. However, if your levels are higher you may have several restrictions including sleeping alone and staying away from children for several days.

What time will I be discharged?

Nuclear Medicine will measure your residual Iodine levels at 8:30 am on the date of your discharge and give appropriate instructions for any precautions. The endocrinologist will then give final discharge instructions. Please arrange to leave before 10:00 am.

Staying well hydrated after the treatment

The salivary glands are similar to thyroid tissue. To avoid damaging these glands it is important to stay well hydrated after the treatment. The nurses will provide you with plenty of fluids. Also, bring hard candies with you, preferably lemon flavored. This helps to stimulate saliva production.

How will I feel afterwards?

Most people feel nothing different during their stay or after discharge. It is possible to feel warmth, tenderness or mild swelling in the neck. You may take an anti-inflammatory such as Advil to relieve the symptoms. Please call the physician or Nuclear Medicine if you experience anything different.

1

How do I prepare for the treatment?

Your endocrinologist will give you specific instructions. You will need to go on a low salt diet for 2 weeks. You may also need to either stop certain medications or receive thyrogen injections before your treatment date.

2

How do I register on the date of the treatment?

You will register at PreAdmin on the 2nd Floor. Afterwards, they will send you to check-in at the 4M nursing station on the 4th floor. A nurse will take your blood work and call the endocrinologist. Nuclear Medicine will then prepare the room, give instructions and administer the dose. You may have a small breakfast on the date of treatment.

3

What does the treatment involve?

You will swallow a small capsule of radioactive iodine. The pill is very small and you will not taste or feel anything. Afterwards, you will stay in your hospital room to avoid exposing the general public from radiation.

4

Follow-up

You will be given an appointment to have a Whole Body Scan completed in the Diagnostic Imaging Department 7 days following the treatment. Images take about 45 minutes. A follow-up scan will be completed after 1 year.

What should I bring to the hospital?

- A comfortable change of clothes for your stay. You can take these home with you afterwards. You will also be provided with a hospital gown and pajamas if you prefer
- A disposable tooth brush
- Your medications
- Hard candies to stimulate your salivary glands
- A cell phone or tablet to keep occupied, WiFi is complimentary
- DO NOT bring food, snacks or drinks other than candies

Low Salt Diet Guide and Recipes

You can find diet tips and recipes at the following website: www.thyca.org