

Nuclear Medicine Iodine Whole Body Scan

General Information

You are receiving radioactive iodine (I-131 or I-123) to check for growing thyroid tissue. This scan is usually given to patients who have had thyroid cancer and who have had their thyroid removed during surgery.

You will receive a dose of radioactive iodine by mouth (usually a pill). Your intestines absorb the iodine. As the iodine travels through your bloodstream, it will be picked up by your thyroid cells.

Once the iodine enters the thyroid cells, the technician will take pictures of your thyroid. The pictures will show if there are new thyroid cells growing. New thyroid cells may allow a place for your thyroid cancer to grow back. It is common to have this scan once a year after your thyroid cancer diagnosis.

Even if you have an allergy to iodine, the procedure is safe. This is a two-day exam. Plan to be at the hospital for 30 minutes the first day and 30 to 60 minutes on the second day. (The second day can be 1 to 3 days after the first day.)

What To Tell Your Doctor

Tell your doctor if you:

- are breastfeeding, pregnant or think you may be pregnant
- take any thyroid medicines
- have had any X-ray procedure that involved contrast in the last 6 to 8 weeks (These procedures include CAT or CT scans, heart catheterization, myelograms or intravenous pyelograms.)

Your Health Care Provider

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

- have had I-131 therapy
- have had thyroid surgery.

Before the Procedure

- Six to 8 weeks before the procedure:
 - Do not have any X-ray procedure that involves contrast, including CAT or CT scans, heart catheterization, myelograms or intravenous pyelograms.
- Four weeks before the procedure:
 - Do not take Synthroid® (unless your doctor ordered thyrogen injections for you).
- Three weeks before the procedure:
 - Do not take Cytomel® (anti-thyroid medicine).
- Two weeks before the procedure:
 - Do not take PTU (anti-thyroid medicine).
 - Do not eat kelp or other seafood that contains iodine (including sea salt).
- Five days before the procedure:
 - Do not take any antihistamines.

(over)

- Two to 3 days before the procedure:
 - If you are a woman younger than age 50, you need to take a pregnancy test. You **must** have a negative test before you can receive the I-131. Fax, send or bring the results to the Nuclear Medicine or Radiology Department of the hospital.

Day of the Procedure

- Do not eat or drink anything 1 hour before or after coming to your appointment.
- You may take your needed medicine with small sips of water. (Do not take the medicines listed in “Before Your Procedure.”)
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.

During the Procedure

- On the first day, you will swallow 1 or 2 pills that have a small amount of radioactive iodine.
 - You will be asked not to eat or drink anything for 1 hour after swallowing the pill(s).
 - You will be given a time to return the second day.
- On the second day (the next day or a few days later), you will lie on your back on an exam table. Pictures will be taken from your head to your thighs.
 - You will need to lie still.

After the Procedure

- Return to your normal activities, diet and medicines. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.

Side Effects

You are receiving a very small amount of radioactive iodine. There are no side effects.

When To Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if you vomit (throw up) within 3 hours of taking the pill the first day.

Follow-up Results

- A radiologist will look at and interpret the X-rays.
- Your doctor will receive the exam results. He or she will either talk with you about the results or mail you the results.

If you have any questions or concerns,

call your doctor or: _____

 _____.