

# Nuclear Medicine Thyroid Uptake and Scan

## General Information

You are receiving radioactive iodine (either I-131 or I-123) to check how your thyroid looks and works. This test can show if:

- your thyroid is overactive (hyper) or underactive (hypo)
- there are bumps or nodules on your thyroid
- you have thyroid cancer.

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 what your thyroid looks like and how it is working.

Even if you have an allergy to iodine, the procedure is safe. This is a 2-day exam. Plan to be at the hospital for 30 minutes both days.

## 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
- have problems swallowing.

## 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®.
- 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).
- One week before the procedure:
  - Do not take any antihistamines.

**(over)**

## Day of the Procedure

- Do not eat or drink anything 1 hour before 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

- A technologist will review your medicines and ask you questions about your health and symptoms.
- 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, you will lie on your back on an exam table. Pictures will be taken of your thyroid.
  - You will need to lie still.

## After the Procedure

- Return to your normal activities, diet and medicines. Follow any instructions your doctor 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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.