

Thyroid Ablation Instructions

Please follow these diet restrictions for two weeks before your scan / treatment:

- Eliminate the following foods from your diet
 - Vitamins that contain iodine (if you are not sure, do not take them)
 - Seafood
 - Iodized salt, sea salt
 - Canned soups and sauces
 - Chocolate
 - Soy Sauce
 - Processed meats including hotdogs, lucheon meat, bacon, ham, corned beef, sausage, and canned meats
 - Sauerkraut
 - Bread, pancake, and muffin mix
 - Molasses
 - Foods that contain red dye
 - Foods that have "iodated" listed as an ingredient

- Restrict the following foods to no more than 2 servings per day
 - Milk
 - Yogurt
 - Ice Cream
 - Non-dairy coffee creamer
 - Eggnog

After Care Information:

- Do not bring other children to ablation. They should not ride in the car with the patient to or from the appointment
- The child should miss school for 7 days
 - Contact your Human Resources department or our social worker if FMLA paperwork needs to be completed.
- The child may not attend activities with children, including church, sports, etc. for 7 days after the ablation
- The child must sleep in a room alone for 7 days after the procedure.
- The child should use a separate bathroom from other family members if possible for 7 days. In addition, he or she should flush toilet 2 times with the top down and wipe down the toilet and sink with water after each use for those 7 days. Boys are advised to urinate sitting down.
- Rinse the bathroom sink and bathtub with water after use to reduce sweat and salivary contamination. Thoroughly clean the bathroom on the 8th day after treatment.
- Maintain a two arm span distance (approximately 1 meter) around others for the first three days after procedure
- Drink plenty of water or other liquids to help eliminate the radioiodine in urine. Frequent urination will reduce radiation to your bladder. Sucking on sour or lemon candy may decrease radiation to the salivary glands. At least one bowel movement daily will limit colon exposure.
- Wash your hands with plenty of water each time you use the bathroom. Take at least one shower daily.

- Washing eating utensils well or use disposable eating utensils for the first three days. Do not bite your nails or put objects (like pencils, necklaces) in your mouth.
- Use a washcloth, towels, bath soap and wash clothes separately.

Transportation Information:

- Do not bring other children to ablation. They should not ride in car with the patient to or from the appointment
- The child should come to the ablation appointment with as few family members as possible. No other children are permitted to come to the appointment with the patient.
- The child may not be transported to or from the ablation appointment on a bus or any other public transportation (including Kid One)
- If you need assistance with transportation to and from the appointment, contact our social worker, who will arrange a rental car for transportation.

Serum Pregnancy test on the day of the ablation if menstruating or teenager

- A pregnancy test must be conducted on the day of the test in the lab on the second floor at Kirkland Clinic
- This test is required for girls who are menstruating or in their teenage years

If the patient is a female age 12 years or older they must have a blood pregnancy test at 8am the morning of the therapy at Kirkland Clinic located on 6th Ave South between 20th and 21st streets. Park in the deck and go to the lab. Then ask them how to go through the crosswalks to Nuclear Medicine at Jefferson Tower at UAB 2nd floor. If you get lost the number to Nuclear Medicine is 205-975-8326 and ask for Gwendolyn.

If the patient is a male you go straight to Nuclear Medicine Department in Jefferson Tower at UAB. Park in the 6th Ave South parking deck between 19th and 20th street. Enter at the Level 2 entrance and read and follow the signs to Jefferson Tower till you get to the elevator. You will then turn right and go past elevators. There will be an information desk on your left and Nuclear Medicine is on your right. Check in at the orange registration desk.

Medication Information:

- Stop Tapazole 5 days before ablation
- Stop PTU 5 days before ablation
- Stop Synthroid 1 month before ablation
- Continue beta-blocker (Propranolol, Atenolol) until 1 month after the ablation
- Your physician might order steroids to be given before the procedure. These should be taken as directed.

Follow Up:

- Follow up with Pediatric Endocrinology 6 weeks after the procedure. This return appointment will be made by our office once your procedure is scheduled.
- You will receive a form to have lab checked 3 weeks after the ablation. Have these labs drawn locally and send the results to our office.
- You will be given a standing order at the 6 week follow up to have labs checked on a monthly basis for 4 months.
- Your doctor will give you further instruction about giving medicines after the ablation based on lab results.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- What is Radioiodine?
 - Radioiodine is a radioactive form of iodine (Iodine 131 or I-131) used in the diagnosis and treatment of various thyroid conditions including hyperthyroidism and thyroid cancer. Radioiodine treatment is given after you and your doctor have agreed that it is the best option for your condition. If you have questions regarding alternative treatments available, you are advised to discuss it with your doctor.
- How does radioiodine work?
 - The thyroid gland accumulates dietary iodine to make thyroid hormones which are essential for normal bodily function. Radioiodine is similarly taken up by the thyroid or left over thyroid gland tissue after thyroid surgery. The radiation emitted in turn decreased the function and/or growth of the thyroid cells, which is the desired medical effect. This effect occurs usually between one and three months after treatment. For hyperthyroidism usually, a single dose is sufficient, however occasionally retreatment may be needed.
- Am I radioactive after Radioiodine treatment?
 - Yes. You should plan to follow radiation safety precautions to protect those around you. If you have any questions about these instructions, you should call the Nuclear Medicine Doctor on-call at 205-975-8325 or through the page operator at night 205-934-3411.
- Is this a safe and effective treatment?
 - Yes. Radioiodine treatment is known to be safe and effective and has been used for several decades all over the world.
- How is Radioiodine administered?
 - It is administered orally as a capsule in variable quantities depending on the diagnosis. If you are unable to swallow a capsule, a liquid formulation is also available.
- What are the side effects of Radioiodine treatment?
 - Treatment is usually well tolerated. Occasionally there may be mild pain in the region of the thyroid gland. Radiation to the salivary glands may cause temporary dry mouth and alteration in taste. Mild nausea and vomiting are not uncommon and are treated easily. Rarely there may be permanent damage to the salivary glands. There is a slight increase in risk of future malignancies especially after Radioiodine treatment for thyroid cancer, including leukemia, cancers of the stomach, urinary bladder, colon and salivary glands. These late side effects are rare and should not deter the appropriate patient from taking Radioiodine treatment.
- What are the long term effects of this treatment on the thyroid gland?
 - Usually, most or all of your thyroid gland will be destroyed with this treatment; therefore you will likely require taking daily thyroid hormone replacement (levothyroxine) for the rest of your life. Thyroid hormone replacement is usually safe and well tolerated under supervision.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact our office.

Pediatric Endocrinology at **205-638-9107**

The building that UAB Nuclear Medicine is located in is Jefferson Tower.

It is on the 2nd floor of Jefferson Tower. Park in the 6th Ave Parking deck and cross over on 2nd floor.

The phone number to UAB is **205-975-8326** if you have any questions.

[UAB map](#)