

I-131 Hyperthyroid Treatment

What is an I-131 Hyperthyroid Treatment?

I-131 hyperthyroid treatment is a type of study performed for the treatment of the thyroid. It is performed in the Nuclear Medicine department. We perform the test by having your child swallow a capsule or drink a liquid. This capsule or liquid contains a medicine combined with a small amount of radioactive material.

Radiopharmaceuticals are carefully tested. The risk of side effects is rare and give low radiation exposure. <http://snmml.files.cms-plus.com/Patients/Nuclear%20Medicine%20and%20Radiation%20Safety%20Factsheet.pdf>

Why is this exam performed?

I-131 hyperthyroid treatment is used for the treatment of an overactive thyroid gland, thyroid cancer, or Graves' disease.

What to expect

Since your child will be awake for the exam, one parent or guardian may be with the child in the exam room. It may be helpful to make arrangements for other siblings. For safety reasons, you will be asked to step out of the exam room if there is a chance you could be pregnant.

Preparing your child is key to the success of this study. To help prepare your child, our Child Life Specialists will help ease your child's fear and anxiety. Please let a staff member know if you are interested in a Child Life consultation at no additional cost.

Your child **should not** have anything to eat or drink for two hours prior to the treatment. In addition, your child **should** maintain a low-iodine diet as prescribed by your physician. Your child **should not** eat fish or seafood, added salt, frozen or canned foods, seaweed or kelp.

For one week following the study, your child **will not** be able to attend school. In addition, he or she **should not** share a bedroom or bathroom with others. Before treatment begins, the staff will provide instructions about what activities are allowed following treatment.

If you **do not** think your child will be able to swallow a pill, please let the Nuclear Medicine technologist know in advance so that the liquid form of the medicine can be ordered.

A Thyroid Uptake and Scan study must be performed in the 30 days prior to this treatment. It will help to determine how much iodine is needed for treatment.

Your child and the accompanying adult will be taken to the procedure room by a technologist and asked to change in to a gown. The technologist will ask why the study is being done and explain it to your child.

For this 20-30 minute treatment:

- A pregnancy test **is required** for all patients 10 years and older. Treatments cannot be given without this requirement being met.
- We will ask you to watch a video that explains the I-131 treatment. The video will provide overview information. A radiologist will explain the treatment in detail, answer any questions and talk with you about the side effects. You will then be asked to sign a consent form.

- Your child will be given the radioactive iodine capsule. This helps to lower the function of the overactive thyroid gland.
- Your child's endocrinologist will follow-up after the treatment. In some cases, a second treatment is necessary six to twelve months later.
- We have television in all the exam rooms. You can also bring a tablet with your child's favorite movies.
- You will be provided discharge instructions at the conclusion of your appointment. You will be given a set of specific guidelines to follow at home.

Following up on your I-131 hyperthyroid treatment

Call your doctor for a follow up appointment as instructed. You can also call the doctor who ordered the study for the results 24 to 48 hours after the test. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call Radiology Nursing at 832-826-5371.