

I-131 Treatment

Department of the treatment: Nuclear Medicine (NM)

Purpose of the treatment:
To treat thyroid cancer.

Notes before the therapy:

1. You will receive some radiation in this treatment.
2. Some medications and food will interfere with the uptake result. Thyroid hormones (eg, thyroxine/T4), antithyroid drugs, iodine-containing food (eg, kelp, seaweed, multivitamin) and medications (eg, iodinated contrast, amiodarone, betadine) should be avoided for 4 weeks.
3. Nothing to eat or drink 3 hours before the treatment.
4. You will be hospitalized usually for 2-4 days in order to reduce radiation to other people.

During the period of the therapy:

1. Please check in first at NM service counter.
2. NM physician will ask you a few questions of medical history.
3. Then, you should be admitted to the ward.
4. NM pharmacist will educate you and give you a dose of radioactive iodine.
5. Please don't eat or drink for 3 hours after the treatment.
6. After discharge, you will be asked to return for imaging.

Total duration of the therapy: About 2-4 days.

Adverse drug effect of the therapy:

1. Early: mucositis, nausea, vomiting, sialadenitis, alterations in taste (metal-like), neck pain and swelling, decrease in white blood cells, et al.
2. Late: damage to the salivary glands resulting in xerostomia (dry mouth) or sialolithiasis, excessive dental caries, dysgeusia (reduced taste), epiphora (from scarring of the lacrimal ducts), or transient infertility.

3. Very rare: carcinoma of the stomach, bladder and colon or leukemia.