

*Better  
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## Patient information

# Thyroid Treatment with Radioactive Iodine

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Royal Liverpool Hospital and Broadgreen Hospital

PIF 320 V3

## **What is thyroid treatment with radioactive iodine?**

You have been referred to a consultant physician in this department. Here you will have tests over a two day period on the size, shape and function of your thyroid gland. This will help them to assess whether you would benefit from this treatment.

## **What are the benefits of having this treatment?**

- The tests will help to find out whether radioactive iodine treatment for your overactive thyroid gland would be of benefit to you.
- Although this treatment is designed to cure your overactive thyroid, more than one treatment may be necessary.

## **What are the risks of this procedure?**

- People often worry about tests or treatments that involve the use of radioactive materials. We tend to forget that we are all exposed to background radiation every day.
- Please remember that the amount of extra radiation from your tests and treatment is small. The benefits to you of treating your over-active thyroid gland outweigh any risk related to this radiation.

## **Are there any alternative treatments available?**

Alternative options will be discussed with you during your clinic visit.

## **What will happen if I decide not to have treatment?**

It is your decision whether or not to proceed with the treatment. Before you sign the consent to treatment form you will have the opportunity to discuss the treatment with the doctor.

## **Female patients**

Where possible, we try to avoid using radioactive materials in patients who are, or may be pregnant. Therefore, please contact the department on Tel: 0151 706 4464 if you are:

- pregnant
- breastfeeding
- you think you could be pregnant
- your appointment is more than ten days from the start of your last period.

**If you are worried and have any questions, please speak to your doctor or a member of their team.**

## **Getting ready for your treatment**

- Please stop Neomercazole / Carbimazole tablets four days before your appointment.
- Please stop Propylthiouracil tablets two weeks before your appointment.
- Please stop Thyroxine / Levothyroxine / T4 tablets at the same time as your other thyroid tablets.
- You may take Propanolol / Inderal as prescribed.
- Please remember to bring all your current medication and a urine sample when you come to the department.

## **Your treatment**

### **Day One**

- Your appointment is in N Clinic, where you will be seen by the doctor to discuss your condition and treatment.

- You will then have a blood sample taken.
- You will then be taken to the Nuclear Medicine department for a thyroid scan, where a radioactive liquid will be given to you by an injection into a vein in your arm. This is taken up by your thyroid gland.
- Approximately 20 minutes after this injection, the Gamma camera will take pictures and a computer will take measurements.
- Once the results are available, the doctor will discuss them with you. If the results show that your thyroid gland is overactive – and you agree to treatment with radioactive iodine – you will be given a small test drink and are then free to go home.

## Day Two

- Your appointment will be in the department of Nuclear Medicine.
- Here you will have a measurement taken over your neck. This is to calculate the amount of radioactive iodine needed to treat your overactive thyroid gland.
- The doctor will again discuss the results and the treatment with you, as well as certain precautions you will be asked to take when you go home.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- Your radioactive iodine drink will then be prepared and you will be given this before you go home.

These tests and treatment **should not** make you feel unwell. Usually there are no ill effects from the injection. It will not make you sleepy nor will it prevent you from driving.

It is rare for it to cause an allergic reaction, even in people who are susceptible to allergies

### **After your scan and treatment**

You should carry this letter with you if you are travelling through train stations, airports and seaports. These areas may have very sensitive radiation detectors in place that can detect extremely small quantities of radiation. It is just possible that, until the radioactivity from this test has completely left your body, you may trigger one of these detectors. In the unlikely event that this occurs, there is no reason to be concerned.

Customs officials who operate these types of detectors are experienced in understanding what the detector has picked up, and after asking you a few simple questions and conducting a brief non-intrusive examination with a hand held detector, will let you pass on your way as soon as possible.

Different countries have different procedures and some may wish to see your appointment letter as part of this process.

**If you are planning to travel in the next four months it is recommended that you carry this letter with you.**

### **After your treatment**

A letter will be sent to the doctor who requested this treatment. This usually takes about two weeks.

### **Cancellations**

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange another for you.

## Location

The Royal Liverpool University Hospital is situated on the edge of the city centre. Please come directly to **N Clinic**, which is situated in the outpatient department on the ground floor of the hospital.

## Transport

The Royal Liverpool Hospital is well served by public transport. Patients and visitors who are able to do so may wish to consider using public transport. For details of routes, services and times please contact the Merseytravel line on Tel: 0151 236 7676.

Parking for patients and visitors is available at the Q-park multi-storey car park. It is located almost opposite the main hospital entrance. The entrance by car is on Epworth Street off Erskine Street.

The car park is open 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Please take your ticket with you when you leave your car. Payment is made when you return to your car at the machines within the car park. Your ticket is inserted into the exit barrier as you leave the car park. The car park is continually monitored by parking hosts and CCTV.

There are ten spaces for the disabled on the entry level of the car park. If you need help, please speak with the parking hosts at the car park entrance.

If you normally require an ambulance when you attend hospital please contact the department as soon as possible.

## Further information

If you have any further questions, or require further information, please contact:

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Tel: 0151 706 4464

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 4464

**Author: Nuclear Medicine**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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