

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA HOSPITALS

DIVISION OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE

Additional Instructions for Continuing Care Following Treatment with Radioactive Drugs

You were treated on _____ with radioactive I-131 oral sodium iodide, and sent home the same day. As a result of this treatment, there is residual radioactivity in your body, which disappears with time. It does not present any immediate danger to your family members, nor to people who may come in contact with you after you are discharged. However, it is prudent that unnecessary exposure to radiation be made as low as is reasonably achievable. Below are special instructions, which will guide you in your interactions with family and friends.

There may be special considerations regarding your trip back to your home. If you are returning by way of a brief trip (less than two hours) in a car with other occupants, we suggest you sit as far away from others as possible. Avoid traveling by way of public conveyance (bus/airplane) for **seven days**.

If you are in school, you should delay returning to school for **seven days**.

We recommend you delay your return to work for **seven days**.

If there are small children, pregnant women or nursing mothers in your household, their presence requires some extra instructions, as well as diligence on your part to see that they are carried out.

If you expect to have regular visitors, they should generally maintain a distance of six feet from you, and you should avoid prolonged close physical contact (such as hugging, kissing or sexual activity) with them. All visits should be brief (under two hours). If possible, arrange for your visitors to use bathroom facilities different from the ones you normally use.

Continue these precautions for seven days.

Please observe the following precautions for seven days (unless otherwise specified):

- Drink plenty of liquids for the first **two** days.
- Shower often for the first **two** days.
- Avoid prolonged close physical contact, such as hugging and kissing members of your household.
- Avoid sexual activity.
- A small amount of radioactive material will be present in your urine, saliva and perspiration for a number of days. Brush teeth, shower and wash hair often.

To avoid splashing, be careful when using the toilet (men should sit down).

- A spouse should sleep in a separate bed, if possible. If not, adjust the sleeping arrangements to minimize physical contact. You may resume your usual sleeping arrangements after **five** days. However, if your spouse is pregnant, delay resumption of normal sleeping arrangements for **ten** days.
- Children should stay at least 6 feet away from the patient, except for short periods of time such as eating meals and essential care-giving.
- Use separate bathroom facilities. If this is not possible, use disposable toilet seat covers or wipe toilet seat with disposable wipes after use. Flush the toilet 2-3 times after use.
- Use separate toiletries such as combs and toothbrushes. Wipe the telephone mouthpiece with disposable wipes.
- Wash the patient's clothing separate from the rest of the family's. Avoid going bare footed indoors (change socks often).
- Use separate eating utensils. Plastic flatware and paper plates work well, as they are disposable.
- Avoid unnecessary car trips, public meetings, gatherings, or other confined spaces with people.

If you have questions about these precautions, or concerns regarding situations not covered in these instructions, please call UNC Radiation Safety (919)962-5507. If you have questions regarding your radionuclide treatment, or suspect you are having side effects from the treatment, contact Nuclear Medicine at (919)966-5233 (after hours, contact Nuclear Medicine personnel on call through the hospital operator at (919)966-4131). If you need to seek medical attention at another facility before _____, please inform your doctor at that facility and show him or her a copy of these instructions.

I have received a copy of the "Guidelines for Patients Receiving Radioiodine Treatment" pamphlet and this additional instructions sheet:

(Patient)