

INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO AND DURING HIGH DOSE I-131 TREATMENT FOR THYROID CANCER.

TEMECULA VALLEY

NUCLEAR MEDICINE
INC.



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1. Your physician has asked us to treat you for your thyroid cancer in an attempt to destroy remaining thyroid tissue that the surgery was unable to safely remove. Please be aware that thyroid cancers can recur and that you can be effectively treated as long as you are closely monitored. The earlier any recurrence is noted (5 simple blood tests) the easier it is to treat.
2. In order to treat you we need you to go on a low iodine diet for at least 2 weeks prior to treatment. This is so that any remaining thyroid tissue maximally takes up the radioactive iodine we will administer to you.
3. There are 2 distinct ways to prepare you for your treatment.
 - a) You can go off your thyroid hormone replacement for a total of 6 weeks, the first 4 weeks we would provide you with a short acting thyroid replacement hormone (Cytomel). During the last 2 weeks we would need you off of all thyroid replacement hormone. This will likely make you feel sluggish, tired, you may experience constipation as well as numerous other side effects. Again we do this in order to have the brain send down a signal to any remaining thyroid tissue that it should activate and make more thyroid hormone. This will prompt to take up the radioactive iodine that we will administer to you.
 - b) the alternative to taking you off of your thyroid replacement hormone is to give you 2 injections of a medication called Thyrogen (on consecutive days). This will have the same result as taking you off of your thyroid replacement hormone. The advantage is that you will be able to stay on your thyroid replacement hormone throughout the whole treatment and not have the side effects of thyroid hormone withdrawal. Most people find this to be the preferable way and it does not significantly diminish the effectiveness of treatment.
4. Treatment will start with you coming into the office.
 - a) **Day 1** you will get an injection of Thyrogen. Most people tolerate this well, a few tell me they feel like they have the sniffles or a mild upset stomach.
 - b) **Day 2** you will get the same injection, with possible similar side effects. .
 - c) **Day 3** you need to go to the lab and have blood drawn, we are measuring both your TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone) as well as thyroglobulin level. You then come to our office to get your treatment dose. **Please make sure that you have not eaten for at least 1 to 2 hours prior to seeing us. You will also need to not eat for 1 hour after taking the pill.**
 - d) You can start eating everything (go off of your low iodine diet (YEAH!)) 24 hours after you have been given your treatment dose (pill).
 - e) It then becomes extremely important for you to increase your liquid intake dramatically. The more you drink the less likely you are to burn your salivary glands or lacrimal glands. We really want to try to avoid you having a dry mouth or dry eyes for the rest of your life. DRINKING IS VERY IMPORTANT! Drinking lots and lots of fluid (any fluid) I have found really helps reduce the likelihood of a lifetime of dry mouth. You will likely find that foods taste funny for a while (several weeks) following treatment, because your taste buds can get burned. **I also suggest that you suck on sour candies, this also helps a lot of people avoid a dry mouth.**
 - f) You will need to be in isolation for several days. The length of time depends on the I-131 dose you need. It is usually between 3 and 5 days. During this time you will

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need to have your own bedroom, your own bathroom as well as your own set of dishes cup, glass, silverware, etc. **NONE OF THIS CAN BE DISPOSABLE!** (You do not want to have to come to the dump with me to find anything you have disposed of that happened to be radioactive). You will not have to throw your dishes etc. away, at the conclusion of your treatment you put it through the dishwasher 2 times and everybody else can use it.

g) If you blow your nose, tissues go into the toilet not the trash!

- h) It is possible that you may develop some neck swelling or sore throat following treatment. If you can take nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (i.e. Motrin Naprosyn, etc.) I find these to be helpful and effective in reducing side effects. If you cannot take these, please let us know. My personal cell phone number is (951 544-7189) should any significant problems arise.
- i) For men, please sit down when passing your water so that it does not spray outside of the toilet bowl.
- j) Your sheets, pillowcases, etc. will also need to be washed twice following your release from isolation. Then everybody can use them.
- k) You should not be intimate with anybody for at least 3 weeks following treatment. You may not exchange bodily fluids with anyone! **Please avoid close or prolonged contact with pregnant women or newborns under the age of 18 months. Newborns up until 18 months have thyroid glands that continue to develop and we must ensure that we do not interfere with that development!.. Dogs have a much higher metabolism rate than humans do and as such probably will not be significantly affected by you, but they should not lick you.**
- l) After 3 to 5 days you will return to the department where your radioactivity level will be measured. The more you drink the faster the radioactive iodine will leave your system and the sooner we can release you from isolation. As soon as you measure low enough, I can release you from isolation and you can be with other people. Again please avoid intimacy (exchange of bodily fluids) or sitting near pregnant women or newborns for the next 3 weeks.
- m) Approximately a week to 10 days following your treatment you will come back to the office for imaging. This will take approximately an hour. We may ask that you come back 1 week later for second set of images.
- n) It is likely that your endocrinologist will then follow you, becoming your oncologist regarding your thyroid cancer.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in your treatment.

Sincerely,

Ernie G Meth, M.D.

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