



# POTASSIUM IODIDE INFORMATION SHEET

## KEEP THIS SHEET WITH YOUR TABLETS

### What is it?

Potassium Iodide (KI) is an over-the-counter medication that can protect one part of the body – the thyroid – if a person is exposed to radioactive iodine released during a nuclear power plant emergency.

### How does it work?

KI fills the thyroid with stable iodine so that it cannot absorb radioactive iodine. By taking KI (before or shortly after exposure to radioactive iodine), it protects the thyroid from damage by radioactive iodine.

### How much should be taken?

The dose depends on a person’s age. The table below shows the doses recommended by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Take only one dose (according to the table below) per 24-hour period. To divide the tablets into ½ or ¼ portions, use a pill cutter or a sharp knife on a hard surface. Crush the doses for infants and small children into a powder and mix with applesauce, pudding, or something else the child likes.

Age Group	KI Dosage	Amount of 65 mg Tablet
Adults over 18 years	130 mg	2 tablets
Over 3 – 18 years *	65 mg	1 tablet
Over 1 mo – 3 years	32 mg	½ tablet
Birth to 1 month	16 mg	¼ tablet

\*Adolescents approaching adult size (70 kg = 150 pounds) should receive a full Adult dose (130 mg).

### Is it safe to take KI?

The FDA has determined that KI is safe for most people. Some people may have mild side effects such as nausea, GI upset, and skin rash. **Pregnant women and newborns should not receive more than one dose of KI and should be checked by their doctor soon after taking KI to make sure thyroid function remains normal.**

### Who should not take it?

- People who are allergic to iodine.
  - People who have the rare disorders, dermatitis herpetiformis or hypocomplementemic vasculitis.
- Anyone who is not sure if they can take KI should check with their doctor.**

### When should it be taken?

If a nuclear power plant emergency occurs, the Emergency Alert System and the media (radio and TV) will notify the public of protective actions that should be taken. These instructions could include evacuate the area; stay inside; and/or take KI. Public health officials will let people know if they need to take KI.

**DO NOT TAKE KI UNLESS PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS TELL YOU TO TAKE IT.**

### Where should KI be stored?

Keep KI in a dry place at room temperature. As with other medicines, KI tablets should be stored where children cannot reach them. Keep this information with the KI.

**Remember...taking KI is not a substitute for evacuation.**

**Leave the area immediately if you are instructed to do so.**

KI will only protect the thyroid from radioactive iodine. If there is a nuclear power plant emergency near you, you must protect your whole body from penetrating radiation and other radioactive material besides radioactive iodine. For more information about KI, go to [www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dph/ki.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dph/ki.htm).

For additional information, see our website at: <https://nc-iredellcounty.civicplus.com/254/13899/Radiation-Emergencies>

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