

What are the side effects of taking Potassium Iodide (KI)?

The incidence of side effects from a single proper dose of KI is very low. Adults, especially those with known iodine allergies, may experience gastrointestinal disturbances, minor skin rash and allergic reactions (possibly severe). Children are less likely to have serious side effects. In infants and children, a short-term change in thyroid hormones may occur.

Who really needs to take Potassium Iodide (KI) after a radiation release?

Infants, children, and pregnant or nursing women are at the highest risk of developing thyroid cancer after exposure to radioactive iodine and should be given first priority for treatment with Potassium Iodide (KI). Newborn infants less than one month old should have their thyroid hormones checked by a doctor and not be given repeat doses of KI.

Is there anything else I should know about KI and nuclear emergencies?

Yes. Potassium Iodide (KI) only protects the thyroid gland from taking up radioactive iodine. It does not protect from other radioactive releases. If a cloud of radioactive gas is released from the Pilgrim Plant, and if it moves toward the area of Cape Cod and the Islands, it will present the most probability of harm for a short period. During the cloud's passage, sheltering in place may be advised. Review the information on sheltering in place contained in this pamphlet. If asked to evacuate the area, remember to take with you emergency items such as portable radios, batteries, a cell phone charger, a 3-day supply of food and water in a sealed container, medicines that you might need and cash.

KI in a nutshell!

Your Health Department is distributing KI or potassium iodide pills in the event of a nuclear accident at the Pilgrim Nuclear Facility. In the event of an accident, listen for advisories relative to actions you should take to protect you and your family from harm.

These actions may involve:

- Sheltering in place
- Taking KI pills
- Evacuation

As with all emergencies, please learn what you need to know ***before*** the emergency.

KI should be viewed as a supplement—not a substitute—for good emergency planning.

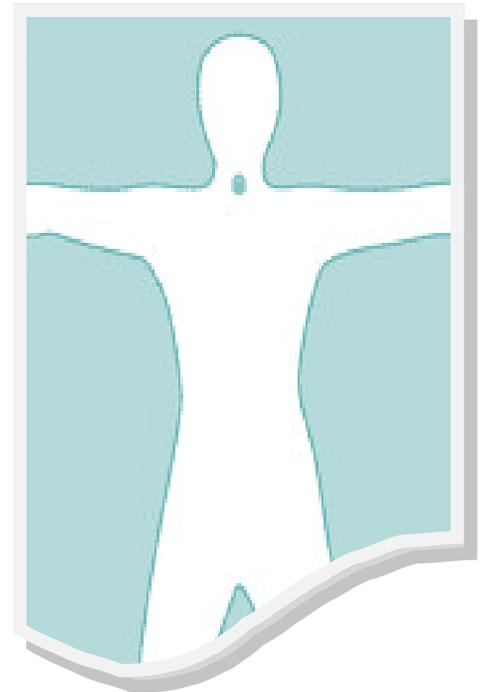
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON POTASSIUM IODIDE (KI)

Contact:
Massachusetts Department of Public
Health Radiation Control Program
Phone: 617-242-3035
or on the web at
www.mass.gov/dph/rcp

What Your Board of Health Wants You to Know About

KI

(Potassium Iodide)



Potassium Iodide (KI)

KI is the abbreviation for Potassium Iodide

KI is a non-prescription medicine that, when used properly, can prevent the uptake of radioactive iodine by the thyroid gland in humans. In the event of a severe accident at a nuclear power plant, one of the gasses released is radioactive iodine. If taken within a few hours of exposure, your thyroid gland is prevented from taking up any of the radioactive kind of iodine, thus preventing thyroid irradiation. In the event of an emergency, you will hear announcements from state and local health officials advising you when to take KI. You may also be advised to "shelter in place" in conjunction with taking KI. If you are given this advisory, proceed to the closest structurally sound indoor locality. Turn off all fans, air conditioners, and forced-air units that bring air in from the outside. Close all fireplace dampers and move to an inner room or basement. Keep your radio tuned to the emergency response network for further instructions and information.

No Prescription Needed

KI pills are being made available to all communities within a certain distance from nuclear power plants. These are distributed to your Local Board of Health by the Mass Dept. of Public Health. PLEASE NOTE: KI pills will only protect you from radioactive iodine. KI does not protect you from other kinds of radio-active material. Pills presently supplied are 130 mg tablets. In an emergency, it is safe for children at school or day care centers to take a whole pill. For children and babies who cannot take pills, caregivers can cut or crush the pill to make lower doses.

If you think you may have medical issues from taking KI, consult your physician *before* there is an emergency.

Age Group	KI Dosage	Number of 130 mg
Adults OVER 18 years	130 mg	1
OVER 3 to 18 years	65 mg	1/2
OVER 1 month to 3 years	32 mg	1/4
Birth to 1 month*	16 mg *1x dose	1/8

How often do I take KI ?

One KI dose is helpful for about 24 hours. You should keep taking the pills until your health officials advise you to stop, or you are out of the emergency area.

Can I get more KI if I want to?

Although not widely available, KI can be purchased or ordered from a number of sources such as pharmacies. Make sure you purchase KI from a reputable source.

Storing KI

KI stays "fresh" for 3-5 years. It should be stored in a dry, dark and cool place that is readily accessible in the event of an emergency.

What if my child is in school during a nuclear accident ?

Cape Cod communities have town-specific plans to distribute KI in advance of a potential event or accident. In school districts, this involves the maintenance of permission slips. If you receive and are requested to return a permission slip, please attend to it as soon as possible. No KI can be given to your child without your permission.

KI Pick Up

For information on where to pick up KI in advance for you and your family, contact your town Health Department.