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JAPAN: Radiation and Iodine

By Dr. David Brownstein M.D.

Dr. Brownstein is the medical director of the Center for Holistic Medicine and author of many books including; **Iodine: Why You Need It, Why You Can't Live Without It and Overcoming Thyroid Disorders. The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Health Dimensions. The original article can be found at www.drbrownstein.com*

I believe this crisis should highlight the need for each of us to take a more active role in our own health care decisions. It is important to take the proper steps to achieve your optimal health before a crisis arises. Many times these steps include eating a healthy diet and taking the correct supplements. My experience has shown that ensuring an adequate iodine level is one piece of the puzzle to obtaining your optimal health.

If the Japanese are not able to control the nuclear reaction that is occurring a true nuclear meltdown will occur. What will that mean to us? A nuclear meltdown could cause a large radiation cloud to leave Japan and deposit radiation over the U.S. However, that has not occurred yet. If that occurs, it is important to take precautions including ensuring that you and your family are taking iodine.

Here is how it works. Iodine binds to receptors throughout the body. For example, there are receptors for iodine in the thyroid gland. When iodine binds to its receptors, thyroid hormone is produced. Individuals who are iodine deficient suffer the majority of problems when exposed to radioactive iodine. In these people, radioactive iodine will bind to wherever there are open or empty iodine receptors. After radioactive iodine binds to these receptors, the surrounding tissue will be destroyed due to the radioactive iodine. Furthermore, it will damage the DNA of the surrounding cells. Damaged DNA is one cause of cancer.

Which tissues bind iodine? The largest concentration of iodine occurs in the thyroid gland. However, the largest amount of iodine is found in the fat tissue. Large concentrations of iodine are also found in many other tissues including the breast, ovary, uterus, and prostate. If radioactive iodine binds to any of these sites, it will destroy surrounding tissue and potentially damage DNA. This can lead to long-term problems such as cancer of these tissues.

It is important to keep in mind that every cell needs and utilizes iodine. Therefore, radioactive iodine exposure can have a dramatic effect on the body.

Exposure to radiation is cumulative. That means any exposure to ionizing radiation builds up in the body over time. We should all strive to minimize exposure to radiation. Some forms of radiation are unavoidable such as normal background radiation. However, radioactive iodine emitted from a nuclear disaster in Japan (or anywhere else) is largely avoidable if your body is iodine sufficient.

If your body has enough iodine binding to its receptors in the thyroid, breasts, ovaries, etc., then the radioactive iodine has nowhere to bind. That is why it is so important to have your iodine levels checked before a disaster such as this occurs. If you are iodine deficient, you can rectify this problem by simply taking iodine.

Due to our exposure to so many toxic items that inhibit or block iodine utilization in the body--fluoride, bromide and chlorine--our body's need for iodine has dramatically increased over the last 30 years. My experience has shown that milligram amounts of iodine are necessary for achieving whole-body iodine sufficiency. In fact, any iodine supplementation program should strive for whole body iodine sufficiency, not just thyroid sufficiency.

Continued on reverse

How much iodine is needed to achieve whole-body iodine sufficiency? My clinical experience has clearly shown that milligram amounts of iodine are needed to achieve whole-body sufficiency. These amounts can vary between 6-50mg/day for most people. Some may need more, some less.

There is no doubt that the radiation cloud from Japan will pass over the U.S. This radiation exposure is a potential health risk. How much iodine should you take to ensure that your body will not absorb radioactive iodine? Without proper testing, it is impossible to say what dose is perfect for everybody. However, I have recommended that adults take 12-14mg/day of a combination of iodine and iodide. That amount will prevent nearly 95% of radioactive iodine from binding to the thyroid gland and still leave other amounts of iodine available for the rest of the body's need. Children will need smaller amounts. You can dose a child down for his/her size. A general rule of thumb for children is 0.08mg/lpound of body weight. If a newborn is breast feeding, they do not need iodine supplementation if the mother is iodine sufficient. Iodine can be excreted in the breast milk.

I generally recommend either Lugol's iodine, Iodoral (from Optimax) or Iodozyme Hp (from Biotics). Lugol's iodine dosage is 2 drops per day (12.5mg) or 1 tablet of each of either Iodoral or Optizyme HP (both products are 12.5mg/ tablets). When should people begin iodine supplementation? At this point, with the disaster still progressing, I would say it is time to begin supplementation with iodine.

As with any substance, there can be problems with iodine supplementation. Before beginning supplementation, it is best to discuss this option with your health care provider

Radiation and Iodine: Q&A

By Dr David Brownstein M.D.

Can those with Hashimoto's or Graves' disease take iodine?

A: I explain this topic in much more detail in my book, but let me summarize the answer. My research has shown that both Hashimoto's and Graves' disease are caused, in part, from low iodine. In fact, nearly every new patient with either a diagnosis of Hashimoto's or Graves' disease has tested significantly low for iodine. My experience has shown that the vast majority of patients suffering with these illnesses improve their condition when iodine deficiency is rectified. However, some people (including those with and without Hashimoto's and Graves' disease) may have problems with iodine supplementation. Of course, there can be an adverse effect to anything, iodine included.

The best results with iodine supplementation occur in those that have their levels checked and are followed by a health care provider who is knowledgeable about iodine. Furthermore, iodine supplementation works better when used as part of a complete holistic treatment regimen.

My understanding is that the reactor in Japan did not release any radioactive gases into the atmosphere so no action is required of us here in the United States. Is this true?

A: So far, the amount of radiation that has made its way to the North America has been small. However, if there is a nuclear meltdown, there will be much larger amounts released. This incident should be a wakeup call for Americans. If we eat better, exercise and maintain optimal whole body iodine sufficiency, there would be little concern about the amount of radioactive iodine that makes it to the U.S.

One final note. Even small amounts of radioactive iodine can be detrimental to those who are iodine deficient. It is best to maintain iodine sufficiency.

How many days should I take iodine?

A: The best results obtained with iodine are seen in those who use it for the long-term. Over the last 30 years, due to the toxic world we live in, our iodine requirements have markedly increased. This is due to the increasing amounts of toxic halides bromide, fluoride and chlorine that have permeated our food supply and our consumer goods. If we maintain iodine sufficiency, we will not have to worry about radiation clouds from Japan. How much iodine is required to maintain body sufficiency? My experience has shown that, for most adults, 6-50mg/day will achieve sufficiency. However, there may be some people that need more and some that need less. Remember, it is best to work with a health care provider knowledgeable about iodine. He/she can test your levels and make the appropriate recommendations.

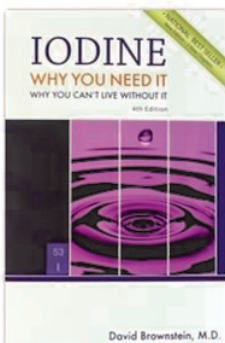
Do children need iodine?

A: Yes, children need iodine just as adults need it. However, children need lower doses. They need to be dosed down for their size. A good rule of thumb for children is 0.08mg/l pound. I am not suggesting that anyone supplement a child without seeking care from their health care provider (that also holds for adults).

-DB



HEALTH DIMENSIONS COMPOUNDING PHARMACY



Dr. Brownstein has expanded and updated this book with all the latest information about iodine. The entire book has been updated with new case histories. In addition, there are two NEW chapters which provide information about:

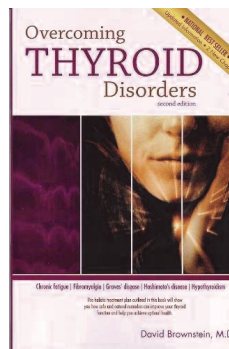
Iodine and Detoxification
Children and Iodine
What iodine does in the body
Why autoimmune thyroid disorders form from a low iodine state
Why it is so important to ensure an adequate selenium intake

Dr. Brownstein feels iodine is the most misunderstood nutrient. He feels it is impossible to achieve your optimal health when there is iodine deficiency present. This book provides information on how iodine therapy can help.

ADHD
Breast Cancer
Detoxification
Fatigue
Fibrocystic Breasts
Graves' Disease
Hashimoto's Disease
Hypothyroidism
Improve the Immune System

This book will show you Dr. Brownstein's latest research about iodine. Each chapter has been updated! Ensuring adequate iodine levels is essential to helping you achieve your optimal health. Dr. Brownstein will provide you with all new information on the importance of iodine

\$14.99



Dr. Brownstein's NEW Book, Overcoming Thyroid Disorders, 2nd Edition has been completely updated. book shows how a holistic treatment program can effectively treat:

Hypothyroidism
Graves' Disease
Hashimoto's Disease
Fibromyalgia
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
Arthritis
And Much More!

Overcoming Thyroid Disorders provides information on safe and effective natural therapies to help the body heal itself. Dr. Brownstein provides over 30 actual case studies of his success in treating thyroid disorders.

Overcoming Thyroid Disorders contains information on:

Natural Thyroid Hormone
Bioidentical Natural Hormones
Diet
Vitamins and Minerals Important for Thyroid Function
Detoxification
And Much More

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