

# POTASSIUM IODIDE

## *Answers to Your Questions*

**With the recent concerns for protection of the public living near nuclear power plants, what is the best protective measure in the event of a radiation emergency?**

Evacuation is the best protective measure in the event of a radiation emergency. Evacuation is the most effective protective measure in the event of a radiation emergency because leaving the area where radiation is present prevents exposure to the whole body (including the thyroid gland and other organs) from all types of radiation.

**We have heard so much about Potassium Iodide (KI). What is the benefit of taking KI during a radiation emergency?**

When potassium iodide is ingested, it is taken up by the thyroid gland. In the proper dosage, and taken at the appropriate time, it will effectively saturate the thyroid gland in such a way that inhaled or ingested radioactive iodine will not be accumulated in the thyroid gland. Radioiodine uptakes from inhalation or ingestion, or both, could result in acute, chronic, and delayed effects. Acute effects from high doses include thyroiditis (inflammation of the thyroid gland which is located in the neck). Chronic and delayed effects include hypothyroidism, thyroid nodules, and thyroid cancer. KI does not protect a person or the thyroid from direct exposure to radiation that may be released in the event of a radiological emergency.

**What is potassium iodide (KI)?**

Potassium iodide, also known as KI, is a nonprescription medication that blocks the uptake of radioactive iodine by the thyroid gland. KI does not protect a person or the thyroid from direct exposure to radiation that may be released in the event of a radiological emergency. Taking KI will only saturate the thyroid with non-radioactive iodine.

**When would I need to take KI?**

Existing emergency plans protect people from the effects of radiation exposure after an accident at a nuclear power plant via evacuation from the area. However, there may be times when evacuation is not feasible and you would be asked to shelter in your home or business. In these cases, you might be asked to take KI to increase the protection for your thyroid gland.

## **Is KI safe?**

For most individuals, KI is safe. However, adverse reactions are possible in persons with existing thyroid conditions and those with an allergy to iodine. Anyone considering the use of KI for themselves or their family should follow the directions for storage and use included with the product.

## **How can individual members of the public obtain KI?**

The FDA has approved KI as an over-the-counter medication.

Residents living within 10 miles of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant (portions of Calvert, Dorchester and St. Mary's Counties) or the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (portions of Cecil and Harford Counties) may pick up KI by contacting their local health department.

Other individuals who wish to purchase KI may do so from any of the following sources:

### Internet Resources

[www.nitro-pak.com](http://www.nitro-pak.com)

[www.majorsurplusnsurvival.com](http://www.majorsurplusnsurvival.com)

[www.anbex.com](http://www.anbex.com)

[www.nukepills.com](http://www.nukepills.com)

### Other Resources

Anbex, Inc.,  
PMB 284  
35246 U.S. Hwy 19 N.  
Palm Harbor, Florida 34684-1931

866-GOFORKI (866-463-6754)

***Inclusion on the above list does not constitute an endorsement of any particular product or vendor.***