

# How to Take KI

KI is taken by mouth.

Take one dose immediately when directed by the Health Officer. Take another dose 24 hours later.

Tablets can be crushed and added to apple sauce or juice.

Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers should take the adult dosage.

Age Group ( <b>one dose</b> )	Number of Tablets ( <b>65mg</b> )
Adults <b>over</b> 18 years	2
Children <b>over</b> 12 to 18 years weighing 150 pounds or more	2
Children <b>over</b> 12 to 18 years weighing <b>less than 150 pounds</b>	1
Children <b>over</b> 3 years to 12 years	1
Children <b>over</b> 1 month to 3 years	1/2
Babies: birth to 1 month	1/4



In a Peach Bottom Power Plant emergency, radioactive iodine may be released into the air and can be breathed or swallowed. It may enter the thyroid gland and damage it. The damage would probably not be obvious for years. Children are most likely to have thyroid damage. If you take KI, it will block or reduce the chance that radioactive iodine will enter your thyroid gland.

KI taken in the recommended dose is safe and free of side effects, except for people who are allergic to iodine. Consult your physician if you have any concerns about the safety of KI.

Persons that have had their thyroid gland removed do not need this medicine.

**The County Health Officer will inform the public when to take KI in the event of a radioactive release.**



Public Health  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Harford County Health Department



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*Disaster  
Preparedness Series*

**Potassium  
Iodide  
(KI)**

**Harford County  
Health Department**

*"Healthy People in a Healthy Environment"*

410-838-1500

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

## Potassium Iodide

### What is potassium iodide and what is it used for?

Potassium iodide (KI) is a salt of stable iodine in medicine form which is an important chemical needed by the body to make thyroid hormones. Most of the stable iodine in our bodies comes from the food we eat.

The thyroid gland cannot tell the difference between stable and radioactive iodine and will absorb both. When you take KI in medicine form it gets absorbed by the thyroid and the gland becomes 'full' and cannot absorb any more iodine, either stable or radioactive, for the next 24 hours.

Iodized table salt also contains iodine. However, table salt does not contain enough iodine to block radioactive iodine from getting into your thyroid gland. You should **not** use table salt as a substitute for KI.



*Remember, children are extremely susceptible to radiation.*

## Instructions

### When should KI be taken?

KI should be taken before or shortly after exposure to radioactive iodine. Even if taken three to four hours after exposure, it still would reduce the uptake of radioactive iodine by the thyroid. However, its effectiveness would be reduced.

### How will one know if the use of KI is indicated in an emergency?

In the event of a radiological emergency, the Health Department will inform you if KI should be taken and if any other actions are recommended, such as remaining at home, school, or work or evacuating. You may be told not to eat some foods or drink some beverages until a safe supply can be brought in from outside the affected area.

***Do not take this medicine unless instructed by the Health Officer or Emergency Management.***

**Side effects** are unlikely because of the low dose and short time taking the drug and include: skin rashes, metallic taste in mouth, sore teeth or gums, upset stomach, symptoms of a head cold, diarrhea.

**KEEP KI OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN**

## Additional Information

*In a radiation emergency, radioactive iodine could be released into the air. Potassium iodide is taken to protect your thyroid in such an emergency.*



### How often should KI be taken?

KI is effective for about 24 hours. The Harford County Health Department will issue instructions regarding how long to continue taking KI. Once you leave the affected area, immediately discontinue use of KI.

**Store KI tablets at room temperature between 59°F and 86°F (15°C and 30°C).**

**Keep package dry and foil packets intact.**

**Keep KI where you know you will find it in case of an emergency.**

Previously distributed KI which has expired, should be thrown away in your everyday trash. **KI should not** be flushed down the toilet or washed down the sink.

For more information, please contact the Health Department at **410-838-1500** or visit **[www.harfordcountyhealth.com](http://www.harfordcountyhealth.com)**