PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Potassium Iodide

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

iOSAT [OTC]; SSKI; ThyroSafe [OTC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to prevent thyroid cancer from radiation.
- It is used to thin mucus so it can be taken from the body by coughing.
- It is used to aid diet needs.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor

about the allergy and what signs your child had.

- If your child has any of these health problems: Certain skin or blood vessel problems.
- If your child has a growth on the thyroid gland and has heart disease.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child's blood work checked often. Talk with your child's doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your

child takes this drug.

- Talk with the doctor before your child uses a salt substitute.
- Give this drug only as you have been told by the doctor. Do not give more than you were told to give or give more often then you were told to give it. Giving too much of this drug may raise the risk of side effects. Do not give this drug if your child is allergic to iodine.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If your child is pregnant or gets pregnant while taking this drug, call the doctor right away.
- Tell the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about any risks to the baby.
- If your child is taking this drug and is breast-feeding a baby, have the baby's thyroid checked.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very

bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Trouble swallowing or speaking.
- Wheezing or coughing.
- Shortness of breath.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Chest pain.
- Fever and joint pain.
- Neck swelling.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- Feeling of heaviness in your arms or legs.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Feeling very tired or weak.

- Feeling confused.
- Very bad headache, metal taste, sore teeth and gums, burning of the mouth or throat, eye irritation, eyelid swelling, more spit, or skin irritation.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Headache.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Stomach pain or diarrhea.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All liquid products:

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug.

Liquid:

- Give this drug with food or a milky drink.
- Mix liquid with water, milk, or fruit juice before giving to your child.
- Do not use if it turns brownish-yellow.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids every day unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.

Radiation exposure:

- Give this drug only when told to by public health officials.
- Give once a day until the chance of being exposed to radiation ends.
- You may make a liquid mixture using the tablet. Crush the tablet and mix it with water as told. It is then to be mixed with low fat white or chocolate milk, infant formula, orange juice, flat soda, or raspberry syrup. The mixture may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
All products:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep lid tightly closed.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

All liquid products:

- Protect from cold.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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