Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Two-Week Hypothyroid Regimen

This information describes your 2-week hypothyroid regimen. This regimen includes diagnostic tests and your radioactive iodine treatment.



Day 1 of your 2-week hypothyroid regimen is:

_____

Before your hypothyroid regimen

- **6 weeks before day 1**, start taking your thyroid medicine (levothyroxine or _____) every other day instead of every day.
- **2 weeks before day 1**, stop taking your thyroid medicine (levothyroxine or _____).
- **1 week before day 1**, start following a low-iodine diet.
  - Follow the guidelines in the resource *Low-Iodine Diet* (www.mskcc.org/pe/low-iodine-diet).
  - Drink at least 8 (8-ounce) glasses of decaffeinated

liquids every day. These liquids should include water and other drinks listed in the low-iodine diet guidelines.

- **3 days before day 1**, have blood work done.
    - If you're a female of child-bearing age, you may have a blood pregnancy test as part of this blood work. This is to make sure you aren't pregnant. It's a hospital requirement for treatment.

During your hypothyroid regimen

During the first week of your regimen, you will have blood work and imaging scans. These scans let us know where the thyroid cancer is. After the imaging scan, you will get your radioactive iodine treatment. You may be admitted to the hospital for treatment. If you're admitted, you will be discharged from the hospital when your level of radioactivity is low enough. If you aren't admitted, your healthcare provider will give you a resource with other instructions.

During the second week, you will have a post-treatment scan. This is done to check where the radioactive iodine is in your body. A staff member in the Molecular Imaging and Therapy Service (MITS), also called Nuclear Medicine, will arrange it for you.

Below is a typical regimen schedule. You may start your week 1 treatment any weekday from Monday to Thursday.

Week 1	Day 1 (2 to 3 hours) • Blood work • Diagnostic dose of radioactive iodine	Day 2 (30 to 60 minutes) • Imaging scan • Treatment dose of radioactive iodine
Week 2	• Post-treatment scan	

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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