

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CAT OWNERS WHICH HAVE HAD TREATMENTS WITH RADIOACTIVE IODINE-131

This instruction sheet is for all homeowners who are taking home a cat that has been treated with radioiodine. The radioactive materials administered to your cat were to treat the thyroid glands to help rectify your cat's ailment. Radioactive iodine chemically behaves the same as the stable iodine and will be taken up in the thyroid. As time passes the radioactive iodine diminishes. This is done in two ways:

First, the radioactive Iodine-131 has a physical half-life of 8 days. This means that every 8 days half of the radiopharmaceutical goes away or "decays". While it's "decaying" it is giving off energy in the form of gamma rays which are used to treat the thyroid in your cat and which exposes the immediate surroundings of the cat to a radiation dose.

Secondly, the body eliminates the radioactive iodine predominantly out of the urine with a small amount in the feces and transpiration due to the breathing.

So, with the combination of the physical half-life and the biological half-life, the rate of decrease of the radioactive materials is accelerated.

The hospital has held your cat where the radiation levels are much lower than at the time of administration of the radiopharmaceutical. However, there is a remnant amount of radiation that will continue to decay and be eliminated for the next few days. For example, if your cat remained in your lap for a few hours, it could provide a dose approximately as much as a dental x-ray. After approximately a week, then there should be no measurable amounts of radioactivity.

Therefore, here are your instructions when you take your cat home.

It is necessary that you understand them and comply with them in order to minimize any unnecessary exposures to you, your family and friends.

1. Encourage as much liquid consumption by your cat. The more it drinks, the more it excretes (urinates) the iodine out of its system. Cat must remain indoors ONLY after discharge.
2. Have a dedicated litter box for your cat. Keep the litter box out of occupied rooms, the kitchen and eating areas, and away from unsupervised pets or children. Keep it somewhat isolated so that it doesn't urinate in other areas of the house or is shared by other cats in the house. Litter must be flushed three times using flushable litter only or it must be disposed of into a plastic bag inside a 5 gallon plastic bucket with a lid to hold the bag and stored for 30 days prior to throwing away in garbage. Other things to put in this bag are the plastic gloves used to change the litter and any litter liners used. If no liners are used or the cat shreds the liner, the litter box is to be thrown

away at the end of the 2 week period. If using flushable kitty litter, flush the kitty litter down the drain (slowly as to not to clog) for the next 7 days. If you have a septic system, then all soiled litter must be returned to our veterinary hospital for disposal.

3. If the cat vomits, urinates or has a bowel movement outside of the litter box, gloves should be used to clean it up and the gloves, along with anything that is used to clean it up must be put in the garbage bag with the cat litter.
4. Wear disposable gloves when handling the kitty litter box, then, throw away the gloves in the trash after each use.
5. Avoid prolonged contact with your cat (more than 5 minutes), including:
 - Cuddling; do not let the cat play with family members or rest in laps or next to adults especially children.
 - Face-to-face contact
 - Direct contact with your cat's saliva or paw pads
 - Keep your cat from sleeping with you at night
 - Limit holding or petting your cat to short periods of time: 3-4 times per day for no more than 5 minutes
 - Always wash your hands thoroughly after any contact with your cat
 - Wear gloves if you need to medicate your cat
6. Pregnant/nursing women and children should have extremely limited contact or none at all during this time period. Please provide the Cat Clinic the names and ages of children and any women who are pregnant.
7. Any toys or articles that are played with by the cat need to be handled with gloves and washed before being routinely touched by people.
8. The above precautions should be implemented for a minimum of 2 weeks.
9. However, keep your cat away from the kitchen or other areas of food preparation and eating for up to four weeks.
10. If you need to take your cat to a veterinarian before this time period is complete, take these instructions with you to the veterinarian.

These instructions are required by the State of XXXXX, Radiation Control Program, for you to read and understand. Therefore, before you take your cat from the hospital, it is necessary for you to sign this form that you understand this information and any risks from the slight potential hazard from this treatment is accepted by you, on behalf of your family and friends. I also understand that the State of XXXX has issued a license for the use of radioactive materials, by trained individuals at the veterinary office, and that these individuals will determine when my cat has reached an acceptable radiation level for release, as set forth in the license.

_____ I am connected to a sanitary sewerage system.

_____ I have a septic system

Signature: _____ (Cat owner at admission)

Signature: _____ (Cat owner at discharge)

Signature: _____ (Veterinary hospital)

Date: _____

Emergency Instructions

_____ was injected with 4 to 6 millicuries of I-131 on _____, 20____

At this time, there is still some radioactivity within the thyroid glands; however, the urine and blood products should not be considered radioactive if two weeks have passed from the date of injection. If not, then gloves must be worn when blood or urine products are handled.

If _____ dies prior to _____, 20____, then the body will still contain some degree of radioactivity within the thyroid glands. Because of this DO NOT dispose of the body in a routine fashion (cremation or burial). The body must be returned to _____ for storage, due to residual radioactivity in the thyroid.

If you have any questions, you may contact _____ at telephone number _____.