



## Usage of potassium iodide (KI) tablets in the case of nuclear emergency

1. Potassium iodide (KI) tablets for protection of the thyroid must **only be taken when radioactive iodine is released into the environment**. Potassium iodide (KI) tablets must **only be taken when instructed to do so by the Ministry of Health**.
2. The optimum time to take potassium iodide (KI) tablets is less than **24 hours** before expected onset of exposure to radioactive iodine. Iodine thyroid blocking with potassium iodide (KI) is still effective **2 hours after** exposure to radioactive iodine, but not later than after **8 hours**. Taking potassium iodide (KI) tablets at other time can be harmful.
3. **Recommended single dosage of potassium iodide (KI) 65 mg tablets according to age group:**

Age	Potassium iodide (KI) dose, mg
Newborns (<1 month)	16 (quarter of tablet)
Infants (1 month – 3 years)	32 (half of tablet)
Children (3 to 12 years)	65 (one tablet)
Adults and adolescents (over 12 years), pregnant and breastfeeding women	130 (two tablets)

**Note:** People who have had their thyroid gland removed do not have to take potassium iodide (KI) tablets.

4. A single dose of potassium iodide (KI) **protects the thyroid from exposure to radioactive iodine for 24 hours**.
5. Neonates (less than 1 month), pregnant and breastfeeding women and older adults (over 60 years), should **take only one single dose** of potassium iodide (KI) and not repeat dosages. Members of other age groups, if directed by the Ministry of Health, can repeat a dosage once.
6. Tablets may be chewed or swallowed whole. To make it easier for children to take the correct dose, tablets can be crushed into a powder or dissolved in water, syrup, or a similar liquid. Dissolved tablets have to be used immediately due to the rapid disintegration of the active substance.
7. Side effects of potassium iodide (KI) are rare. For more information, read a package insert.
8. It is not recommended to use alcoholic or aqueous iodine solutions, iodine sprays or food supplements containing iodine that are sold in pharmacies for the protection of the thyroid during a nuclear emergency. Alcoholic iodine solution is for external use only – to apply on the skin. Its active ingredient is not potassium iodide, but simply iodine, which is a highly oxidizing and toxic substance that can cause chemical tissue burns and poisoning, and under no circumstances should be taken, even when diluted with water.

