

QUINTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL QUINTON, NEW JERSEY

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school building is located within the 10-mile emergency planning zone of the (Salem Hope Creek) nuclear generating station.

As part of New Jersey's preparedness planning, the Department of Health and Senior Services began taking the over-the-counter drug potassium iodide (KI) available for use during a radiological emergency.

In accordance with this planning initiative, schools within the 10-mile emergency planning zone have been given a supply KI for storage and use, in the event of a nuclear emergency.

Proper use of KI protects the thyroid from exposure to radioactive iodine and can reduce the risk of thyroid cancer after a severe nuclear emergency event resulting in a release of radiation. It is a supplement to evacuation or sheltering. Evacuation and sheltering remains New Jersey's primary public protective actions in the event of an accident at any nuclear generating station.

Please read the attached KI information sheets and mark the appropriate box of the attached KI permission slip, which will alert the school officials of your choice to have your child receive or not receive KI in the event of a radiological release. This form will remain in effect as long as your child attends this school; unless you notify us in writing that you have changed your choice.

Should a county and/or state health official recommend the use of KI during an emergency, the school will have KI available on-site for your child. In the event that evacuation is not immediately possible, and KI is recommended, an appropriate dose of KI will be available for your child.

If you have any concerns regarding the emergency use of KI or questions on your child's health and the use of KI, please discuss this with your child's health care provider.

For more information on radiation safety, visit www.nj.gov/health.

If you have any further questions about the school's program, please contact the school nurse at 935-2379 ext. 128.

Potassium Iodide Fact Sheet

What is KI?

KI stands for potassium iodide. Potassium iodide is an ingredient found in table salt. KI can provide protection for the thyroid gland from radioactive iodine and can reduce the risk of thyroid cancer after a severe nuclear emergency resulting in a release of radiation.

What is the benefit of taking KI during a nuclear emergency?

During a nuclear emergency, people can either swallow or breathe in radioactive iodine that has been released into the air. Once inside the body, the radioactive iodine can cause a variety of health effects. The thyroid gland is very sensitive to radiation. KI can reduce the risk of thyroid cancer and other associated diseases, particularly in children and fetuses, if taken within several hours of exposure to radiation.

How soon after a nuclear emergency should KI be taken?

KI should be taken as soon as possible after public health officials tell you to do so. You should take one dose. Taking more will not help you because the thyroid can "hold" only small amounts of iodine.

Where can I get KI?

As part of New Jersey's preparedness activities, the Department of Health and Senior Services has made KI available to people who live or work within 10 miles of a nuclear power plant. KI has also been distributed to schools within 10 miles of a nuclear power plant. KI can also be purchased over-the-counter at pharmacies without a doctor's prescription.

Can everyone take KI?

Most people can take KI. However, people who are allergic to iodine should NOT take KI. You should talk to your health care provider before an emergency occurs to determine if any medical conditions prohibit you from taking KI.

Can pregnant or breastfeeding women take KI?

Yes, unless they are sensitive to iodine. For pregnant or breastfeeding women or babies under one month of age, KI should be taken as directed and a family doctor informed as soon as possible. KI can also be given safely to babies and children.

Can pets take KI?

No. KI is not recommended for pets.

Is KI the best protection from radiation?

While KI can help to protect the thyroid gland, it cannot protect against other health effects caused by radiation. In the event of a nuclear emergency it is best to avoid exposure to the radiation. Evacuation or sheltering in place are the best ways to avoid the problems caused by radiation. Be sure to follow any directions given by state/local health officials regarding any protective procedures.

Are there any common side effects caused by KI?

KI has few side effects. Children are not at higher risk of side effects. Side effects usually happen when people take more doses than needed. Take the amount indicated on the table below and do not take it for longer than you are told. Possible minor side effects are skin rashes, swelling of the salivary glands, metallic taste, burning mouth, sore teeth/gums, stomach upset, diarrhea, or headaches. If you have severe side effects or a severe allergic reaction, call a doctor or go to the nearest hospital.

What form does KI come in?

KI is most commonly available in tablet form, although there is a limited amount of liquid form available.

When and how much KI should I take?

KI should not be taken until public health officials tell you to do so. The following table provides the 'recommended doses:

Age	Form of KI
	65 mg* Table
Adults over 18 years	2 Tablets
Children over 12 years to 18 years who wight at least 150 lbs	
Children over 3 years to 12 years	1 Tablet
Children over 12 years to 8 years who weigh less than 150 lbs	
Children over 1 month to 3 years	½ Tablet
Babies (birth to one month)	¼ Tablet

*milligram; **milliliter

Only one dose should be taken every 24 hours. Taking a higher dose or more often than recommended will not help and could increase the risk of side effects.

For more information, visit the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services website at www.nj.gov/health.