Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child has been referred for radioiodine therapy to treat Graves disease. This therapy is one of several possible treatments for Graves disease including surgery and taking anti-thyroid medicines. Radioiodine therapy (also called I-131 therapy) has been used for over 50 years, has proven to be effective and is believed to be safe. The goal of radioiodine therapy is to stop production of thyroid hormone by the patient’s thyroid gland. Therefore, eventually thyroid hormone replacement therapy will be necessary. I have enclosed information about the condition and radioiodine treatment. I am happy to discuss the information with you more by phone or email.

Here is a summary of how the radioiodine therapy is done:

• There will be an initial consult with the Radioactive Iodine Treatment Team to assess suitability for treatment and review radiation safety instructions.

• **Your child must stop taking anti-thyroid medications (methimazole) for 1 week before the treatment.**

• The treatment at Seattle Children’s Hospital takes place over 2 days of visits, usually a Thursday and Friday.

• Females 12 years and older need to provide a urine sample in our lab for pregnancy screening before having the radioiodine treatment.

• On the first day, we will give your child a dose of radioactive iodine. They will then have an ultrasound to see the size and volume of their thyroid gland.

• About 4 to 5 hours later that day, your child will have a thyroid uptake scan. This helps us determine how much radioiodine to give them.

• Your child will return the next morning for another uptake scan. We use information from the scans to determine the dose of radioiodine for treatment.

• The dose capsule is usually ready in an hour or two for your child to take. Patients and their family often leave by noon.

Since being exposed to the radioiodine (I-131) can be harmful to the thyroid of a developing fetus or a young child, it is very important that your child not have any close contact with pregnant women or young children for several days after their treatment. It is very important that you and your child carefully follow the guidelines in the enclosed handout. It lists important steps to take before and after your child’s treatment.

If you have any questions, call the Nuclear Medicine division to talk to me or one of the nuclear medicine technologists at 206-987-2137. My email address is hedieh.khalatbari@seattlechildrens.org. To schedule the thyroid scan, ultrasound and treatment, call 206-987-2089.

Yours Sincerely,

Hedieh Khalatbari, MD
Pediatric Radiologist and Nuclear Medicine Physician

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