

Thyroid I-131 Malignancy Follow-up Test

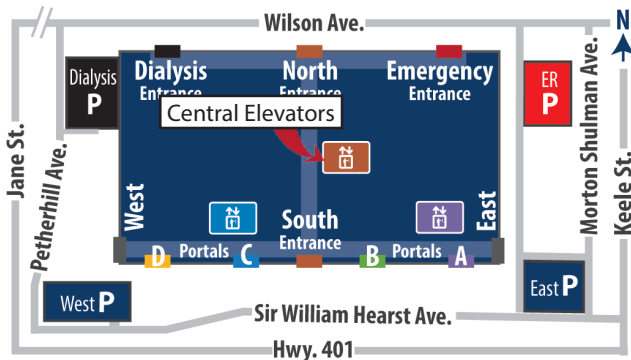
Appointment Information



You have an appointment for a **thyroid I-131 malignancy follow-up**. The test takes place over 2 days. Please read this handout for information on how to prepare for this test.

Location: Medical Imaging - Nuclear Medicine, Humber River Health
1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON M3M 0B2

We are located on the main floor (level 1), behind the Central Elevators. Follow the signs to Nuclear Medicine Registration.



Arriving by car (or Wheel-Trans): Use the South Entrance.

Arriving by TTC: Use the North Entrance.

Bring to the hospital:

- Your health card (OHIP) and photo ID.
- All the medicines you are currently taking, including over-the-counter medicines, herbals and supplements, in their original containers.

Do not bring jewelry or other valuables.

What is a thyroid I-131 malignancy follow-up test?

A **thyroid I-131 malignancy follow-up** is a test used to determine if your thyroid cancer has returned. You will need to swallow a small capsule similar to the radioactive iodine treatment, but with less radiation.

If you have any remaining or re-occurring thyroid tissue, the tissue will pick up the radioactive iodine. We will use a special machine in front of your neck to count how much radioactive iodine has been absorbed. This amount will show us how much thyroid tissue, if any, has returned. We will then use a special camera to take pictures of your body.

For more information on thyroid cancer or this test, visit:

Thyroid Cancer Canada
www.thyroidcancer.ca

If you have questions about your appointment, please contact:

Medical Imaging - Nuclear Medicine,
Humber River Health
Tel: (416) 242-1000 ext. 63823
7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday

How do I prepare for the test?

TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU:

- Are pregnant or think you may be pregnant.
 - You and your doctor will discuss the safety issues of having the test at this time. You may also have to have a pregnancy test on the day of the test.
- Are planning to become pregnant.
 - Please talk to your doctor. You will need to use effective birth control methods for at least 6 months after your test.
- Are breastfeeding.
 - STOP breastfeeding at least 6 weeks before the test.
 - DO NOT resume breastfeeding your current child as you may permanently damage their thyroid gland. Breastfeeding is safe for any babies you may have in the future.
- Are taking your thyroid medicines.
 - Your doctor will let you know when to stop and how to follow a 2-week low iodine diet.
- Have had a test that used a contrast dye within the last 6 weeks.
- Have any allergies, especially to any medicine.
 - Share this information with your healthcare team and wear your MedicAlert® bracelet.

What can I expect during the test?

The thyroid I-131 malignancy follow-up test takes 2 visits to the Nuclear Medicine Department.

DAY 1

BEFORE THE TEST:

- DO NOT eat or drink for 2 hours before the test.
- Take your medicine as your doctor advised.
- If you need support, you may have someone with you during the test. Please do not bring young children or pregnant women.
- The technologist will bring you into a special room where you will swallow the capsule with water.

AFTER SWALLOWING THE CAPSULE:

- You will be able to go home soon after you have taken the capsule. We will ask you to return to the hospital 2 days later.
- Do not eat or drink for 1 hour after swallowing the capsule.
- Drive home alone. If this is not possible, choose a seat that keeps as much distance as possible between you and the other person.

DAY 2

BEFORE THE TEST:

- Take your medicine as your doctor advised.
- If you need support, you may have someone with you during the test. Please do not bring young children or pregnant women.
- Remove hair clips or metal objects you are wearing that may interfere with the camera.
- Do not bring jewelry or other valuables.

DAY 2 (continued)

DURING THE TEST:

- You will need to sit very still on a chair, while the technologist positions a machine close to your neck.
- The machine will detect the radiation that the iodine gives off. While the machine is counting, you must keep your head and neck still and breathe normally. This will take several minutes. You will not feel anything while the machine is counting.
- After, the technologist will bring you to the camera room and position you on the imaging bed, under a special camera.
- The camera will detect the radiation from the iodine. Please lay very still and breathe normally while the technologist takes the pictures. You will not feel anything.
- During the scan, the technologist may also need to do a low dose CT scan.

AFTER THE TEST:

- The test should take about 1 hour to complete.
- You may be able to go home soon after you have finished your test.
- You may resume your regular diet.

What are the side effects from this test?

Common side effects from the test include:

- Nausea
- Upset stomach
- Neck tenderness.

Less common side effects include:

- Vomiting

Most of these side effects can last from a few days to a couple of weeks.

Are there any risks associated with this test?

There is a low risk from the radioactive iodine capsule. Your body is able to get rid of the radioactive iodine within several days. The radioactive iodine will stay in any remaining thyroid tissue. During the first few days after the test, your body will get rid of most of the radioactive iodine that your thyroid tissue does not collect. This is mainly through urine, but your saliva, sweat, and bowel movements may also have very small amounts.

This test is safe and effective for you, but others who stay close to you for long periods may be exposed to unnecessary radiation. They may also come in contact with small amounts of radioactive iodine from your urine, saliva, or sweat.

See “How do I keep everyone safe while my body gets rid of the radioactive iodine?” on the following page for safety measures you must follow to limit the radiation your body and bodily fluids can give off to others.

When do I receive my test results?

A specially trained doctor will interpret your pictures and send a report back to your doctor. This usually takes several days.

When your report is ready, you can view it on **myHumberHealth** (<https://myhumberhealth.ca>) or buy an electronic copy from **PocketHealth** (<https://hrh.mypockethealth.com/request>). Please make sure we have your correct email address at registration.

Your doctor may order other tests to gather more information.

How do I keep everyone safe while my body gets rid of the radioactive iodine?



You **must** follow the safety measures listed below and on the following page to limit the radiation your body and bodily fluids can give off to others.

If you will not be able to follow all of these safety measures, let your doctor know.

FOR THE FIRST 3 DAYS:

- Limit others' exposure to unnecessary radiation:
 - » Keep at least 2 meters (6 feet) away from all people (especially pregnant women and children under 18 years of age, as they are more sensitive to radiation) and pets.
 - » Arrange for others to provide childcare for infants and young children.
 - » Sleep alone.
 - » Do not kiss. Avoid sex and other physical contact.
 - » Avoid activities where you may be close to others for more than 5 minutes, such as in movie theaters, sporting events, and public transportation.
- Eating and Drinking:
 - » Drink plenty of fluids to help flush away the extra radioactive iodine.
 - » Do not chew gum.
- Preparing Food:
 - » Use separate tableware (plates, cups, glasses, cutlery). Wash them separately from others.
 - » Do not prepare food for others.
- Personal Hygiene:
 - » Empty your bladder often. Sit on the toilet when peeing to avoid splashing. Wipe any spills. Flush the toilet 2 times.
 - » If you can, use a separate washroom in your home.
 - » Shower every day, especially for the first 2 days. Rinse the shower/tub after every use.
 - » Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and rinse the sink after every use.
 - » When brushing your teeth, spit directly into the sink or toilet. Rinse thoroughly and wipe any spills from surfaces.
- Clothing, Bedding, and Towels:
 - » DO NOT share towels or wash cloths.
 - » Wash your towels, bed linens, underwear, and other potentially contaminated clothing separately.
 - » Wear slippers or shoes and socks when walking around.

FOR THE FIRST 3 MONTHS: Small amounts of the radioactive iodine from your thyroid may set off radiation monitors at airports, border crossings, and waste disposal sites. If you will be in these areas (or travelling outside of Canada) in the near future, tell your doctor or technologist. They may provide a letter describing your treatment.