



# Feline Radioiodine Center

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Email: I-131Records@nva.com (preferred) Tel: 503-292-3001

## Post-radioiodine Care Instructions for 72 hour stay

These instructions are designed to keep you and your family safe. If, for any reason, you cannot follow all of these guidelines, please let us know so that we can problem-solve with you. If you have any concerns and you are not able to reach us, please contact REAC/TS at 865-576-1005 (24/7 National Hotline).

Your cat was administered radioactive iodine (I-131) and still contains a low level of radioactivity. Since some radioactivity will be present, it is necessary to adhere to the following safety precautions:

- 1. It is not normal for your cat to vomit, to be lethargic or not eat after being released from the hospital.**  
Please contact your regular veterinarian or an emergency clinic if these conditions are noted.
  - a. If your cat requires veterinary attention, please inform the veterinary hospital that they have had I-131 therapy and the date of the treatment. Each staff member is allowed 30 minutes of close contact time per day for the first seven (7) days after discharge.
  - b. If, for any reason, your cat should pass away within the next 80 days, please let us know so that we can counsel you on precautions that must be taken.
- 2. Limit close contact (within one foot) with the patient following release from the hospital to not more than:**
  - a. **Children under the age of 12: 10 minutes per day for 14 days**
  - b. **Adults: 30 minutes per day for 7 days**
  - c. **Pregnant women: Should have no contact with the cat, its urine or feces for 14 days**
  - d. **Note:** Your cat does not have to be kept isolated unless you prefer. They can be out in the household as long as they are more than 1 foot away from family members for the times noted above, and all litterboxes are treated as potentially contaminated.
- 3. Family members should not sleep with the cat for 7 days after discharge.**
- 4. Use disposable gloves** when cleaning any bodily fluids and when scooping litter.
- 5. Wash your hands** well after handling your cat, their food dish, and litter pan for **7 days** after discharge.
- 6. Litter box protocols** must be followed for **7 days** post treatment (*see below*). Any remaining litter and waste must be stored for 80 days before disposal in the trash. (*Full details follow*).
- 7. If your cat should vomit, urinate or defecate outside the litter box during the first 7 days:** Radioiodine has relatively easy cleanup. Cornell University's Feline Hyperthyroid website has helpful and practical information. *Please disregard the time lines as New York has different requirements than Oregon.*  
  
As a general rule, items can be \* laundered 2x \* flushed 3x (as appropriate for material, avoid splash), or \* stored for 80 days at which time radioiodine is non-detectable. Wet Swiffer pads are a good clean up tool. The pads, disposable gloves, and paper towels, etc can be stored in litter bucket.
- 8. Your cat must be kept inside for 2 weeks** after release from therapy. After 2 weeks, your pet can return to their normal lifestyle.



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## Litter Management and Follow up Care

After your cat has I-131 therapy, your cat and their bodily fluids, primarily urine, are radioactive. The highest level of radiation is right after injection. Radiation is reduced by~ 1/2 at the time of discharge. However, precautions need to be taken for the first 7 days.

-You must **collect litter for 7 days, then store it for 80 days** to ensure that all the residual radioactive material has decayed naturally (essentially to zero). Large fines can result if radiation is detected by a public landfill.

- We recommend a **clumping litter** as it allows waste to be scooped out easily and stored. If you are currently using a **flushable litter**, please flush at least 2x and close the lid to avoid splatter.

### How to collect and store litter:

1. Place 2 heavy duty kitchen trash bags in a 5 gallon bucket with a tight lid (e.g. Home Depot, Lowe's).
2. Wear gloves to scoop litter. Place in a doggie poop bag and tie a knot at the top, then in a gallon zip lock bag. Place all in the lined bucket. **DO NOT KEEP THE BUCKET IN A COMMON AREA.**
3. After 7 days empty the entire contents of your litter box(es) into the bucket.
4. Clean the litter boxes/pan with hot soapy water. Wear gloves, place gloves in litter bucket.
5. Tie off trash bags tightly, place in bucket. Add odor control if desired & firmly attach the lid. Tape shut.
4. Use the provided label or write on lid: Radioactive Animal Waste; the date you sealed the bucket; the date you can throw it away in normal city trash (**80 days**).
5. Place bucket in garage or other isolated space away from common areas (secure from public access).
7. In 80 days discard bucket in regular trash. **REMOVE BIOHAZARD MARKINGS BEFORE DISPOSAL.**

**Report card:** *(will be written specifically for your cat)*

**Medications:** *(will be written specifically for your cat)*

### Follow-up care:

1. **Diet:** *(will be written specifically for your cat)*
2. **Medications to be given at home:** *(will be written specifically for your cat)*
3. When you get home, please **wipe your cat with baby wipe or wet hand towel to remove any residual litter they may have carried into their bedding.** Place in your bucket or laundry 2x, then wash hands. We do our best to wipe them down here, but some kitties are so excited when they see their carrier, they hop right in.
4. Cats can develop **arthritis** as they age. Your cat may be stiff after not stretching their legs during their stay. Lower dose gabapentin can be given for a few days (e.g. 1/2 of pre-visit dose). Please call your vet if concerns.
5. Please schedule follow up appointments with your regular veterinarian NOW for **~1 month, 3 months, and 6 months.** **Do this sooner if you have any concerns e.g rapid weight loss or gain, excessive or reduced drinking or urinating, lethargy, etc.** [Exam, cbc, chemistries, thyroid **to a reference laboratory**, U/A, blood pressure].
6. Follow up care and communication will be through your primary veterinarian. Please ask them to email all records. We will manage your cat's case together to ensure that they are doing well after radioiodine therapy.