Preparing for Scans with a Low-Iodine Diet

Before undergoing radioactive scanning, you may be asked by your physician to follow a low-iodine diet. The following diet tips and sample menus may help you manage your low-iodine diet. Of course, as with other aspects of your therapy, it's important to consult with your healthcare provider about diet changes and other test preparation.

Foods you can eat

- Kosher salt
- Egg whites
- Fresh non-cured meat from the butcher
- Fresh fruits and vegetables, washed well (limit bananas, spinach, and broccoli)
- Frozen vegetables with no added salt
- Canned peaches, pears and pineapples
- Matza/ Matzah/ MatzoHomemade bread made from non-iodized salt and oil (not soy) instead of butter or milk
- Natural unsalted peanut butter
- Clear sodas
- Coffee or tea made with distilled water (with non-dairy creamer only)
- Popcorn popped in vegetable oil or air popped, with non-iodized salt
- Sorbet (without FD&C red dye #3)



Foods to avoid that contain iodine

- Iodized salt and sea salt
- All dairy products (milk, sour cream, cheese, cream, yogurt, butter, ice cream)
- Margarine
- Egg yolks
- Seafood (fish, shellfish, seaweed, kelp)
- Foods that contain carrageen, agar-agar, align, or alginate (all of these are made from seaweed)
- Cured and corned foods (ham, bacon, sausage, corned beef, tuna, etc.)
- Marinated chicken or turkey
- Dried fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Bread products that contain iodate dough conditioners
- Chocolate
- Molasses
- Soy products (soy sauce, soy milk, tofu)
- Foods that contain FD&C Red Dye #3



Please note

A low-iodine diet does *not* restrict sodium or salt. It only restricts *iodized* salt or sea salt. Any salt that is labeled ***non-iodized*** may be used freely.

Menu Suggestions

The sample menus below are examples of meals that are suitable as part of a low-iodine diet

BREAKFAST Sample Menu

- ¼ cup quick-cooking oatmeal, ½ cup water or apple juice, 2 tsp. honey, and 2 tbsp. raisins (optional)
- 1 medium banana, apple, or pear
- 8 oz. (1 cup) orange, grape, or grapefruit juice (fresh or reconstituted with distilled water)
- 1 cup coffee or tea, with 2 tsp. sugar (optional) and 1 tsp. powdered non-dairy creamer (optional)
- 12 oz. (1 ½ cup) distilled water

LUNCH Sample Menu

- 1 roasted chicken breast (meat only) seasoned with black pepper, non-iodized salt, and fresh herbs
- 1 small garden salad seasoned with olive oil and lemon juice to taste
- 1 medium orange, apple, or plum
- 1 cup coffee or tea, with 2 tsp. sugar (optional) and 1 tsp. powdered non-dairy creamer (optional)
- 12 oz. (1 ½ cup) distilled water

DINNER Sample Menu

- 6 oz. fresh chicken, beef, or turkey breast, may use black pepper, fresh or dried herbs, vegetable oil to season
- 1 baked or mashed potato without skin
- 1 cup fresh vegetables (examples: green beans, carrots)
- 1 cup jello made with water (any color but red) or sorbet
- 12 oz. (1 ½ cup) distilled water

More Low-Iodine Diet Tips

- When you are maintaining your low-iodine diet, it would be wise to avoid restaurant food, as it is difficult to determine the exact ingredients being used to prepare the food
- You may want to shop and freeze or store your ingredients before starting your diet to avoid being tempted by iodine-containing foods at the store

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References
Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc. (2015). *Low-Iodine Cookbook* (8th ed.). Accessed online at thyca.org February 2016.
The Light of Life Foundation, Inc. (2014). *The Light of Life Foundation Cookbook* (2nd ed.). Accessed online at lightoflifefoundation.org February 2016.

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