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Nuclear Request for Sodium Iodide I-131 Treatment and Patient Release Information

Comment On: NRC-2015-0020-0014
Sodium Iodide I-131 Patient Release Information Collection; Request for Information

Document: NRC-2015-0020-DRAFT-0031
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Submitter Information

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General Comment

See attached file. Thank you.

Attachments

Breastfeeding and I-131, NRC-2015-0020

SUNSI Review Complete
Template = ADM - 013
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Add= *D-B Howe (dbh)*

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February 15, 2016

Cindy Bladey
Office of Administration
OWFN-12-H08
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

RE: NRC-2015-0020

Dear Ms. Bladey,

In June 2015, I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer while breastfeeding my six month old. I am preparing to undergo I-131, and I have had a hard time finding information specifically related to breastfeeding and I-131. My endocrinologist knew I needed to stop breastfeeding before receiving I-131, but was not sure how long I needed to stop breastfeeding prior to the therapy. At the recommendation of my endocrinologist, I consulted with a breast cancer oncologist, who recommended I discontinue breastfeeding six weeks prior to the therapy. I also consulted with an endocrinologist from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, who recommended I discontinue breastfeeding three months prior to the therapy. The information published on the American Thyroid Association's website recommends discontinuing breastfeeding at least six weeks prior to the administration of I-131: <http://www.thyroid.org/radioactive-iodine/>.

I was confused with the difference in recommendations: from six weeks to three months. My confusion was greatly reduced when I read the American Thyroid Association Taskforce on Radioiodine Safety's article "Radiation Safety in the Treatment of Patients with Thyroid Diseases by Radioiodine 131I: Practice Recommendations of the American Thyroid Association". This article, specifically the portion on breastfeeding found on p. 9, indicates that "[b]reastfeeding must be stopped at least six weeks before administration of I-131 therapy, and a delay of three months will more reliably ensure that lactation-associated increase in breast sodium iodide symporter activity has returned to normal." In addition to giving recommendations when to stop breastfeeding, this article discusses the reasons for the recommendation to stop breastfeeding prior to I-131. This article can be found at: <http://www.thyca.org/download/document/184/ataradiation.pdf>.

The detailed information in this article was very beneficial for my decision making, and I believe this information would greatly assist other nursing mothers in their preparation for I-131. If you develop a website or brochure to prepare patients for I-131, I recommend either linking to this article or publishing the portion on breastfeeding (with permission from the American Thyroid Association).

Sincerely,

Rachelle Greczyn