

POTASSIUM IODIDE

Potassium iodide should be included in emergency supplies for use as a thyroid blocking agent. When properly used, it prevents the accumulation of radioactive iodine in the thyroid gland. Many Americans may not be able to avoid exposure to radioactive iodine during a nuclear crisis, although proper civil defense preparations would prevent that exposure for most people.

Potassium iodide administration must not be mistaken for an oral antidote to radiation. There have been numerous claims about diets and dietary supplements which allegedly protect humans from radiation. As advocated, these claims are usually false. While it is true that some diets optimize the ability of human tissues to repair radiation damage and to resist its secondary effects, the quantitative range of improvement is small when compared with the ranges of likely radiation exposure.

It would be tragic for people to be killed or seriously injured by radiation exposure which they falsely believed had been neutralized by a special diet.

Potassium iodide is an oral supplement that for very unique reasons happens to be protective against the long-term effects of low-level exposure to the radioisotopes of one particular element. Since those isotopes are very soluble in water and unusually long-lived, it is especially useful to have this supplement in the event of a nuclear disaster.

Detailed instructions are given in Nuclear War Survival Skills for the use of crystalline potassium iodide. Potassium iodide tablets are also available, but, as a result of bureaucratic regulations, they are very expensive.

We have previously written in this newsletter about potassium iodide and have recommended Van Waters and Rogers chemical supply company as a source. Unfortunately, Van Waters and Rogers prefers to sell only to other companies, and some people have had difficulty in ordering from them.

We now have a less expensive source which is willing to sell to the general public.

Nasco (best known for their 50 year old mail order farm supply business) also has a "Science" catalog. This catalog offers a very wide selection of teaching aids for grade school science including chemistry supplies. The chemistry supplies include reagent ACS grade potassium iodide. Current prices are \$10.50 for 100 grams (catalog number SA9682M) and \$35.50 for 500 grams (catalog number SA9683M). They also offer a practical grade, but the price is not enough lower to warrant the lower purity.

The NASCO telephone number is 1-800-558-9595. I suggest that you ask them to send both their "farm" and "science" catalogs.

NASCO is not selling this potassium iodide for human consumption nor are we suggesting that you buy it for human consumption. This potassium iodide is an emergency supply to be used *only* in a severe, life-threatening nuclear emergency. In such an