

Radioactive Iodine Information for Referring Veterinarians

ARRANGING A REFERRAL FOR TREATMENT:

Hyperthyroid cats are treated in batches of 4 and treatment days typically occur once monthly. To arrange referral for our next available treatment date please contact Alison Downie, Internal Medicine technician at (226)924.5792.

Prior to referral, please fax a brief summary of the patient's medical history, results of recent laboratory diagnostics (including a total T4, renal profile and urine specific gravity) and treatments administered. Our fax number is (519)763.1276.

WHAT CAN MY CLIENT EXPECT DURING THE APPOINTMENT?:

The Radioactive Iodine Unit is located in the Animal Cancer Centre and clients will be admitted via the ACC reception.

The following baseline diagnostic tests will be performed during the appointment:

- Physical examination
- Complete blood count
- Serum biochemical profile
- Urinalysis
- Total T4
- Blood pressure
- Thoracic radiographs

IS MY PATIENT A CANDIDATE FOR I-131 TREATMENT

Cats are admitted to the Radioactive Iodine Unit 3-4 days prior to treatment to allow them to acclimatize to the hospital environment. If a cat does not eat while in hospital we will not pursue treatment. For this reason we encourage owners to bring along any treats, food or toys that may make them more comfortable. It is important to note, however, that any toys or bedding can not be returned to the owner.

After radioiodine treatment, cats can be handled minimally for the following 4-7 days. As a result, we will not accept "sick" or unstable cats for treatment as their care is limited after treatment.

The prevalence of concurrent chronic kidney disease in hyperthyroid cats is approximately 30%. Approximately 20-25% of hyperthyroid cats without known CKD will develop azotemia after successful treatment of hyperthyroidism (regardless of treatment modality) and there is no predictable pre-treatment way to determine which cats will develop azotemia. Prior to referral, please ensure that the patient has been evaluated for evidence of renal disease. In cats with preexisting renal disease, treatment with methimazole should be pursued if possible prior to considering radioactive iodine treatment. We recognize that GFR will decrease with treatment of hyperthyroidism and typically stabilizes approximately 1 month after resolution of the hyperthyroid state. If renal function remains stable for 1-2 months after establishing a euthyroid state I-131 may be considered. If there is a marked deterioration in renal function or for cats with IRIS stage III or IV CKD a reversible treatment may be preferred.

ANTITHYROID MEDICATIONS:

Methimazole will be discontinued upon admission to the I-131 unit (approximately 3-4 days prior to referral).

TREATMENT AND HOSPITALIZATION

Hyperthyroid cats are treated with a fixed low dose of radioactive iodine administered via subcutaneous injection. After treatment, cats are hospitalized for a minimum of 5-7 days until their radioactivity has reached an appropriate level. As a result, most cats will be in hospital a total of 10-14 days.

In general, radioactive iodine treatment will result in cure in over 90% of cats. A total T4 and renal profile should be rechecked 1 and 3 months after treatment to ensure that the treatment has been successful. Approximately 5% of cats fail to respond completely and almost all of these cats can be cured by a follow-up treatment however a higher dose may be required.

We look forward to treating your patient. Please don't hesitate to contact Dr. Danielle Richardson or Alison Downie RVT if you have any questions about your case at (519)823-8830.