RE: Distribution of Potassium Iodide (KI)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school is located within the ten-mile emergency-planning zone (EPZ) of the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant. In January 2001, the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission amended its policy on the availability and usage of the over-the-counter drug potassium iodide (KI) during a radiological emergency. As a result, New York State also revised its policy regarding providing KI to the general population in the ten-mile emergency planning zones.

KI is an over-the-counter drug that protects the thyroid from exposure to radioactive iodine. KI only protects one organ against one radioactive substance. It is not an alternative to evacuation or sheltering (see attached KI information sheet). In fact, evacuation and sheltering remain New York's primary public protective actions in the event of an accident at any nuclear power site.

Should the County and/or State Department of Health recommend the use of KI during an emergency, Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES will have KI available on-site for your child. Evacuation from the ten-mile EPZ remains our primary protective radiological action. In the event that KI use is recommended by County or State health officials, an appropriate dose of KI will be available for your child.

If you do not want the school to provide your child with KI in a radiological emergency, you must sign and return the enclosed form to your child’s teacher. This form will remain in effect as long as your child attends this school building, unless you notify us in writing that you now wish your child to be provided with KI. Please note that if you do not return the enclosed form and KI use is recommended by health officials, your child will receive KI.

If you have any concerns regarding the emergency use of KI or questions on your child’s health and the use of KI, please discuss this with your child’s health care provider.

If you have any further questions about the school’s program, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael Skerritt

Attachment
2019-2020
Potassium Iodide (KI) Refusal/ Opt-Out Form

If you DO NOT want your child given Potassium Iodide (KI) in the event of a radiological emergency, complete this form and return it to your child’s school within three days.

I understand that Potassium Iodide (KI) may be given to my child if recommended by the County and/or State Department of Health in a radiological emergency.

I have read and understand the Parent/Guardian letter and the Potassium Iodide (KI) Parent Questions and Answers.

I DO NOT want my child given Potassium Iodide (KI) in the event of a radiological emergency.

STUDENT INFORMATION:

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<tr>
<th>Teacher Name</th>
<th>BOCES School/Program</th>
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PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

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IF YOU DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM AND KI USE IS RECOMMENDED BY HEALTH OFFICIALS, YOUR CHILD WILL RECEIVE KI.
1) **What is potassium iodide (KI)?**

Potassium iodide is a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved over-the-counter drug that can be used to protect the thyroid gland from immediate and future radiation injury caused by radioactive iodine released during a nuclear accident.

2) **How does KI work?**

KI saturates the thyroid gland with stable (non-radioactive) iodine, thus preventing or reducing the amount of radioactive iodine that will be taken up by the thyroid. Radiological emergencies may release radioactive iodine in the environment. Since iodine concentrates in the thyroid gland, inhalation of air or ingestion of food contaminated with radioactive iodine can lead to injury to the thyroid - including an increased risk of thyroid cancer.

3) **Does KI protect individuals from all types of radiation?**

No. KI is only effective against exposure to radioactive iodine. KI does not protect against other types of radiation.

4) **Does KI protect organs other than the thyroid?**

No. KI does not protect body organs or tissues other than the thyroid.

5) **Is a prescription necessary?**

No. KI is a FDA approved over-the-counter drug.

6) **Should some people avoid KI?**

Yes. According to the FDA, people with known iodine sensitivity, thyroid diseases, clusters of itchy skin blisters (dermatitis herpetiformis), and/or an inflammation in blood vessels involving the skin or multiple organs of the body (hypocomplementemic vasculitis) should avoid the use KI. A physician should be consulted before an event occurs with individual concerns on whether to take KI in an emergency.

7) **What are the possible side effects to KI?**

According to the FDA, the benefits of taking KI far exceed the risks. The possible side effects may include stomach upset and minor rash.

8) **When is KI most effective?**

To be most effective, KI should be taken shortly before or shortly after exposure to radioactive iodine. Even if taken three to four hours after exposure, it would still reduce radioactive iodine from being absorbed by the thyroid and still have a substantial effect.
9) How long is KI effective in the body?

The protective effects of KI last approximately 24 hours.

10) Is KI an alternative to evacuation?

No. Evacuation remains the primary protective action in a radiological emergency.

11) What happens if the ten-mile EPZ cuts through the school district?

Only school buildings located within the ten-mile EPZ will receive KI from the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO).

12) Who may administer the KI to children?

Designated individuals in the school may administer the KI to children once recommended by the New York State and/or County Department of Health in an emergency situation.

13) Is a physician’s order necessary for KI administration in a radiological emergency?

No. KI administration in a school is part of an emergency protocol to deal with a radioactive iodine release into the environment.

14) What if a child can’t swallow pills?

The pill may be safely crushed and given with juice, applesauce, etc. in the event that an individual cannot swallow it. It may also be easily dissolved in water.

15) How will schools be notified that events warrant the administration of the KI to children?

The State Department of Health and/or County Department of Health are charged with issuing the recommendation to administer KI in the event radioactive iodine is released into the environment.

16) Will the adults in the school building also be provided with KI?

Yes. KI will be provided to all adults in school buildings located within the 10-mile EPZ. However, according to the FDA, it is not necessary for persons over 40 years of age to take KI in a radiological emergency.