WHAT IS THE THYROID GLAND?
The thyroid gland located in the neck produces thyroid hormones which help the body use energy, stay warm and keep the brain, heart, muscles, and other organs working normally.

OVERVIEW
To increase the effectiveness of your upcoming radioactive iodine therapy, you may be prescribed a low iodine diet. Iodine is used in the care and feeding of animals and as a stabilizer and/or safety element in food processing. Therefore, it may be found in varying amounts in all food and beverages. The highest sources (and those to be avoided) are iodized salt, grains and cereals, some breads, fish from the sea, shellfish, beef, poultry, pudding mixes, milk and milk products. Detailed recipes that follow a low iodine diet can be found on the following websites: www.checkyournect.com (Light of Life Foundation) and www.thyca.org (ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors’ Association). Below are general guidelines to follow on this diet.

Avoid the following foods:
- Iodized salt
- Any vitamins or supplements that contain iodine (especially kelp and dulse)
- Milk or other dairy products including ice cream, cheese, yogurt and butter
- Seafood including fish, sushi, shellfish, kelp or seaweed
- Foods that contain the additive carrageen, agar-agar, alginate, or nori
- Commercially prepared bakery products that are made with iodate dough conditioners
- FD&C red dye #3 – this appears in in maraschino cherries and occasionally as a pink/red artificial color in beverages
- Egg yolks, whole eggs and foods containing whole eggs

Foods that are ok:
- Non-iodized salt may be used as desired
- Milk chocolate (due to dairy content)
- Blackstrap Molasses (unsulfured molasses is fine)
- Soy products (soy sauce, soy milk, tofu) [note: soy does not contain iodine. However, high soy ingestion has been shown to interfere with radioactive iodine uptake in animal studies.]

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Menu options:

**Breakfast**
- Any fruit or fruit juices
- Egg Beaters
- Oatmeal with toppings – cinnamon, honey, applesauce, maple syrup, walnuts, fruit
- 1 slice toast
- Black coffee or tea

**Lunch**
- Vegetarian or chicken with rice soup
- Matzo crackers
- White or brown rice with vegetable plate (fresh or frozen)
- Salad – fruit or vegetable – oil and vinegar dressing
- Fruits – fresh, frozen or canned
- Black coffee or tea

**Dinner**
- 6 oz Roast beef, lamb, veal, pork, or turkey
- Potato – baked or broiled
- Vegetables (fresh or frozen)
- Salad – fruit or vegetable – oil and vinegar dressing
- Fruits
- Black coffee or tea

**Snacks**
- Fresh fruit or juice
- Dried fruits such as raisins
- Fresh raw vegetables
- Applesauce
- Unsalted nuts
- Fruit juice
- Unsalted peanut butter (great with apple slices, carrot sticks, crackers or rice cakes)
- Matzoh and other unsalted crackers
- Home-made bread and muffins

**Summary Guide**
- No iodized salt
- No dairy products or foods containing dairy products
- No foods from the sea
- Limited grain products (ie noodles, pasta, pastries) – 1 slice bread, ½ cup pasta daily
- Limited amounts of beef, chicken and turkey

**Additional Guidelines**
- Avoid restaurant foods since there is no reasonable way to determine which restaurants use iodized salt.
- Consult your doctor before discontinuing any red-colored medication or any medication containing iodine (i.e., Amiodarone, expectorants, topical antiseptics).
- Avoid all herbal supplements (especially when one is not sure how much iodine they contain).