



## GLOBAL HEALING SEMINARS TREATMENT WITH DR. JANINE LEX

### **Iodine Sufficiency** by Janine Lex • June 2006

It seems there is always something new on the market that totes amazing health benefits and restored energy. There is renewed interest in iodine, a familiar additive to food. As current research has shown, historical claims of the human need for iodine are genuine and more urgently detrimental, if we are iodine deficient. We are living in an epidemic whose face is so familiar we don't recognize it.

Iodine has been identified as an essential element for human function for well over a century. The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that iodine deficiency is a significant health problem in 129 countries. WHO says that approximately one-third of the world's population lives in iodine deficient areas and up to 72% of the world's population is affected by an iodine deficiency disorder. (1) We are most familiar with thyroid conditions and iodine. Iodine deficiency, though, has been linked to mental retardation in infants, asthma, angina, gout, goiter, syphilis, hemophilia, nephritis, bronchitis, liver detoxification deficiency, cancer and more.

Iodine, though essential for human function, is greatly misunderstood and feared by some of the current medical establishment. I find that this has occurred for two reasons. First, some organic iodine containing drugs are extremely toxic despite the fact that it has been clearly demonstrated that it is the whole molecule that is toxic. The inorganic iodine has been put on the bad guy list. Secondly, a study was published almost 60 years ago suggesting that too much iodine could cause serious side effects. The findings in this study were not challenged until recently. My recent review of the literature in the National Institute of Health's (NIH) library sites only 2 cases of iodine toxicity related to elemental iodine. These were extreme cases well outside the supplemental consumption of iodine.

Dr. Guy Abraham, former professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and endocrinology at UCLA School of Medicine has published a series of articles refuting iodine's supposed dangers and suggests that iodine is safe and essential to our strength, vitality and

wellness. He has documented the positive side effects of iodine which include: resolving heavy metal (lead and mercury) toxicity; preventing and reversing fluoride; bromide and perchlorate toxicity; improved thyroid and adrenal function; regulating blood pressure; resolving cardiac arrhythmia; improving sugar metabolism and diabetes; regulating moods; alleviation of fibrocystic breasts and ovaries; and possibly preventing cancer in breasts, ovaries, uterus, prostate and thyroid. Iodine is also an antiparasitic, antifungal and antibacterial agent which enhances the immune system. That makes iodine an exciting and essential nutrient to explore.

#### **WHY DON'T WE GET ENOUGH IODINE?**

Iodine is naturally occurring in the ocean but, otherwise, is scarce on planet earth. Soils growing crops with adequate amounts of iodine are usually near the ocean. Sea vegetables and fish such as cod, sea bass, haddock and perch, are abundant sources of iodine.

Conversely, areas not near oceans, like the Midwest, are deficient in iodine. A study done in the early 1900's, found children in Ohio and Michigan demonstrated goiters that responded to iodine supplementation. Because of this finding, the nation adopted iodized salt as a way to get iodine into the diet and prevent goiter and mental retardation. The amount of iodine in iodized salt is far below the body's required need for iodine, but it did offset the incident of goiter in the last century. Iodized salt is not consumed as much as it was 30 years ago. Due to salt restricted diets and the availability of sea salt and its many advantages, iodized salt consumption is radically down in the more health conscious population. Our US RDA of iodine is 150-290 micrograms of iodine per day. The average consumption of iodized salt would supply about 770 micrograms of iodine. There is research which has shown the iodine in salt is only 10% biologically available, which leaves us with 77 micrograms, if we are eating 10 grams (2 tablespoonsful) of iodized salt per day. So, even a small amount of iodine can have great and far ranging health benefits. But, what if we were actually getting what our body could use?



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Dr. Abraham estimated the total body iodine sufficiency is 1,500mg-2,000mg. With this level of iodine in the tissues, the thyroid would have 50mg of iodine. The breasts, muscles and fat would follow as the respective greatest reserves of iodine in the body. Once one achieves iodine sufficiency, Dr. Abraham has shown that the required daily intake of iodine to maintain the body's needs is at least 13mg. per day. This means the RDA for iodine needs to be revised and updated to include this more current research.

The Japanese ingest approximately 13.8 mg of iodine per day through consumption of sea vegetables. They have a much lower incidence of breast cancer, fibrocystic breast, ovarian, and thyroid disease. For most of us consuming sea vegetables at this level is not really possible or palatable. One solution would be to supplement our soil with iodine and thereby create more iodine rich land food. This would be easy to do with elemental iodine or seaweed fertilizer. Kelp, a sea vegetable high in iodine, is great in vegetable gardens. In the absence of your own kelp fertilized vegetable garden grown year round and broad scale change on agricultural practices, supplementation makes perfect sense.

### IODINE'S AMAZING ABILITY TO PROTECT US

When Hiroshima was bombed during WWII, Dr. George Osawa noticed the people least effected by the radiation were those eating a simple indigenous diet. Born out of his revelations was the Macrobiotic system of healing popularized in this country by Michio Kushi. (Macrobiotics is a system used to heal people from some of the more debilitating diseases like cancer and MS.) One of the important foods used in Macrobiotics is iodine rich seaweed. One of the treatments for exposure to radiation is iodine. Potassium iodine was hailed in Russia and Poland, as a god sent, when it proved to prevent and help with thyroid susceptibility to radioactive iodine after the Chernobyl accident.

Iodine's ability to protect tissue from damage is related to the tissues saturation with iodine. This happens at the cell wall. There are little receptors sites in all of our cell walls that receive halogens. If you've studied the periodic table you will remember them as iodine, chlorine, fluorine, and bromine. When a cell wall has insufficient iodine these receptor sites remain available and are open to binding with other molecules with iodine or one of the halogens in it, radioactive iodine, potassium bromide,

and perchlorate to name just a few. Such is the interchangeability of the halogens in the biological process. The problem is that bromine, chlorine and fluorine can inhibit the body from performing to its capacity and even cause disease when it is binding to sites meant for iodine.

Dioxin and perchlorate, two of the most dangerous and most prevalent environmental pollutants, have the ability to bind to these sites as chlorine is one of their main constituents. Detoxification and protection from these carcinogenic, hormone disruptors is achieved through adequate levels of iodine in the tissues.

### IODINE AND THYROID

Thyroid illness is under diagnosed and yet is being found in increasing numbers. Every cell in the body relies on thyroid hormones for optimal functioning. It is the major metabolic regulator in the body. Our current medical establishment commonly measures thyroid function via serum levels of T3, T4 and Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH). Other ways of evaluating thyroid function are through monitoring basal body temperature, saliva testing, and heart variability testing. Signs and symptoms are also telling when it comes to suboptimal thyroid function. (You will find a list of symptoms at the end of this article.)

The thyroid hormones are made with iodine. Thyroxine (T4) and Triiodothyronine (T3) are named for the number of molecules of iodine they possess. When there is insufficient iodine, these molecules cannot be made. The end result is a poorly functioning thyroid and goiter, an increased risk of thyroid cancer, and auto-immune thyroid problems. Often the best and most successful treatment for a low functioning thyroid is iodine.

### TESTING FOR IODINE SUFFICIENCY

An easy test for iodine sufficiency is the patch test. Swab a 2 inch square of iodine on the soft skin of the inner upper arm and check for its absorption rate. In a body fully iodine satisfied it should take 18 to 24 hours for the iodine to be absorbed. Check the spot in 6 hours and then again at 12 hours. If the iodine is completely absorbed it is a solid indicator you are iodine deficient.



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Urine tests for iodine excretion are also available. I recommend these after the patch test has been done and some level of sufficiency has been achieved to get specific values for long term supplementation or if there is a history of breast cancer or thyroid disease.

### SUPPLEMENTS AND DOSAGE

Lugol's Iodine, named for the French physician who developed it in the 1820's, is the most biologically available iodine and has been used safely and successfully for almost 200 years. This is available in tablets or liquid.

For those who are iodine deficient gradually build up to taking 50mg daily for three months. Then take the Loading Iodine test from FFP Laboratory and from those findings adjust your dose.

For children 12 years old to normal healthy adults taking 12.5 mg/day is good for maintenance.

For children from 6 to 12 years old I recommend 6.25 mg per day and for those under 6 years of age 3mg per day.

Some side symptoms that could occur with initial supplementation can be resolved by halving the dosage and gradually working back up to full dosage. These symptoms are not allergic reactions but are detoxification reactions and metabolic pathways clearing other halogens which have taken iodine's place. These side effects are: salivation and sneezing, a brassy taste in the mouth, a frontal or sinus type headache, or an acne-like rash. Taking chlorophyll for the metallic taste in the mouth is helpful. Also if these symptoms occur it is a good idea to take 3000 mg of Vitamin C and a good multiple vitamin help clear out the metabolic pathways.

### SUMMARY

Iodine's importance in human life has been underestimated in the last century due to unfortunate reporting of information. Because it is critical to the most elemental human physiology, everyone needs to be tested for iodine sufficiency and reap the benefits of a fully functioning metabolism. Testing is simple and supplementation is inexpensive. Hopefully in the future there will be agricultural practices that will provide this nutrient in our land based food and lowered environmental toxicity loads. Until that time you and your loved ones will be well served by

doing the patch test periodically and adding iodine to your supplemental regime to increase health and protect yourselves from the growing environmental threat of perchlorate and dioxin.

### Signs and Symptoms of Hypothyroidism

Brittle nails  
Menstrual irregularities  
Puffiness  
Forgetfulness  
Cold hands and feet  
Fuzzy thinking  
Intolerance to cold  
Muscle weakness  
Muscle cramping  
Hoarseness  
Poor stamina  
Hair becoming fine  
Weight gain  
Hair loss  
Constipation  
Hypotension  
Depression  
Dry skin  
Elevated cholesterol  
Inability to concentrate  
Fatigue

### Footnotes

1.WHO. IBID 3/27. 12Nov. 1998

### Recommended reading

"Iodine: Why You Need It, Why You Can't Live Without It"  
by Dr. David Brownstein

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