

## Low Iodine Diet

The purpose of a low iodine diet is to deplete the amount of iodine that is naturally stored in your body. This will increase the effectiveness of the imaging tests and treatment procedures you receive. You will be asked to follow this diet for 2 weeks before your tests and treatment. If you receive radioiodine therapy, stay on the diet for 2 days after your treatment.

## Foods to Avoid

- Iodized salt, sea salt and any foods containing iodized salt or sea salt
- Seafood and other sea-based items (fish, shellfish, seaweed, seaweed tablets and kelp)
- Egg yolks, whole eggs or foods containing whole eggs
- Dairy products, including milk, cheese, cream, yogurt, butter, ice cream, powdered dairy creamers, whey and casein (a type of protein found in milk)
- Foods or products that contain these sea-based additives: carrageenan, agar-agar, algin, alginate and nori
- Most chocolate (for its milk content)
- Molasses; avoid sulfured or blackstrap forms of molasses
- Commercial bakery products made with iodate dough conditioners, such as potassium iodate or calcium iodate (found in the product ingredient list)
- Red dye #3 in red, orange and brown processed foods and pills and capsules (found in the product ingredient list)
- Cured and/or corned foods, such as ham, lox, corned beef and sauerkraut
- Soybeans and most soy products (soy sauce, soymilk and tofu). However, soy oil and soy lecithin are okay.
- Beans
- Iodine-containing multivitamins and food supplements

## Allowed Foods and Ingredients

- Fruits and fruit juice (except rhubarb and maraschino cherries with red dye #3)
- Vegetables that are raw or frozen and without salt
- Fresh meats such as chicken, beef, pork, lamb and veal (up to 6 ounces a day)
- Rice
- Egg whites
- Up to 4 servings per day of grains, cereals, pasta and breads (1 serving of cereal, grain or pasta = ½ cup; 1 serving of bread = 1 slice)

## Allowed Foods and Ingredients (continued)

- Pasta without iodine-containing ingredients. These include whole eggs, milk, cream, iodized salt, sea-based additives and iodate dough conditioners.
- Sugar, jelly, jam, honey and maple syrup
- Snacks such as unsalted nuts, unsalted popcorn, unsalted matzo crackers and other unsalted crackers
- Homemade low-iodine bread or muffins
- Unsalted peanut butter or other nut butters (great with apple slices, carrot sticks, unsalted crackers and unsalted rice cakes)
- Applesauce
- Black pepper, fresh or dried herbs and spices
- All vegetable oils, including soy oil
- Regular and diet sodas (except with red dye #3), non-instant coffee, non-instant tea, alcoholic beverages and lemonade

## Sample Meals

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup orange juice</li> <li>• Egg white omelet with allowed vegetables</li> <li>• 1 slice whole wheat toast with margarine</li> <li>• Coffee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turkey sandwich without cheese</li> <li>• Large green salad (lettuce, tomato, cucumbers, carrots, etc.)</li> <li>• Salad dressing (made with allowed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 ounces chicken</li> <li>• Green beans with margarine</li> <li>• Baked potato without the skin</li> <li>• 1 dinner roll</li> <li>• 1 cup strawberries</li> <li>• Ice tea</li> </ul>

## Key Points

- This is a low-iodine diet, **not** a no-iodine diet or an iodine-free diet.
- Read the ingredients listed on packaged food labels.
- You may use non-iodized salt.
- Because some restaurants use iodized salt, avoid all restaurant food during this time.
- You will need to follow this diet **before** you have a radioactive iodine scan or a

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radioactive iodine treatment. Your doctor will tell you how long you need to follow this diet (usually 1 to 2 weeks).

- It is important to continue all of your current medicine as directed by your doctor, even if the medicine contains small amounts of iodine.
- For additional information and a free copy of a low-iodine cookbook, visit the Thyroid Cancer Survivors Association website at [www.thyca.org](http://www.thyca.org)

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