Post-Radioiodine Nurse-Led Thyroid Virtual Clinic

This leaflet explains what happens in the virtual clinic for patients who have undergone radioiodine treatment for a thyroid condition.

What does this clinic do?

The Post-Radioiodine Nurse-Led Thyroid Virtual Clinic helps improve continuity of care by ensuring timely blood test results for thyroid function are reviewed, drug dose adjustments made and your treatment is closely monitored.

How is this clinic 'virtual'?

You do not need to attend hospital – the clinic is held via telephone calls made by the endocrine nurse, based at the Diabetes and Endocrinology Centre. This allows the nurse to monitor your thyroid status, review blood test results and make any drug dose adjustment or medication changes.

How often will the virtual follow-up appointments be?

The virtual clinic appointment calls will be every 4 to 6 weeks for a period of 6 months or so. The endocrine nurse contacts you by phone to monitor you and discuss your blood results with you.

How will my treatment be managed following the radioiodine treatment?

It is important that you inform the endocrine nurse that you have had the radioiodine procedure a few days after the treatment so that the first follow-up thyroid blood test and virtual clinic appointment can be scheduled.

Anti-thyroid drugs, such as carbimazole or propylthiouracil, are usually restarted 7 days following the radioiodine treatment. If you are taking anti-thyroid medication, thyroid blood tests must be done in good time as requested by the endocrine specialist nurse or doctor, so that any hypothyroidism can be managed appropriately with levothyroxine replacement.

The first thyroid blood test is done at week 4 after the radioiodine treatment. This can be done either at your GP surgery or at the Royal Berkshire Hospital's phlebotomy (blood test) department, open from Monday to Friday 7.30am-4.15pm (except bank holidays). You can book a hospital blood test online by visiting https://www.swiftqueue.co.uk/royal_berkshire.php

The first follow-up virtual clinic appointment call will be scheduled for week 5, after the radioiodine treatment. The endocrine nurse will discuss your blood test results, thyroid status and suggest any changes to your medication, if required.

A follow-up letter and blood form/s for the virtual clinic phone consultation will be sent to you and a copy of letter to your GP.

What are the side effects of radioiodine that might make me feel unwell?

The radioiodine works by causing the thyroid gland to become underactive – known as 'hypothyroidism'. **The effects of hypothyroidism can be unpleasant, however, this can be minimised if thyroid blood tests are done in a timely manner and you are available for your follow up call on the scheduled date.** For example, any changes seen in the thyroid blood test results that show evidence of hypothyroidism can be picked up and treated promptly with levothyroxine (a thyroid hormone replacement medication that you will need to take for life).

What happens after 6 months?

If your thyroid hormones have normalised with or without Levothyroxine at around 6 months or so, the endocrine nurse or doctor will discharge you from the endocrine services back to the care of your GP.

Your thyroid hormones should be rechecked by your GP at 3 months and if stable, 6 monthly for the first year, and then annually thereafter to ensure that the thyroid hormones remain stable. Very occasionally, your GP may need to adjust your levothyroxine.

What if the radioiodine has not worked?

If the thyroid hormones remain unstable after 6-8 months, a second dose of radioiodine may be required. This will involve re-referral to the endocrinology doctor for re-assessment.

A second dose of radioiodine treatment is safe and is usually successful in normalising the thyroid hormones. The follow-up procedure for the second dose treatment remains exactly the same as for the first dose treatment.

If you have any questions about this clinic, please contact:

Violet Fazal-Sanderson (Senior Specialist Nurse – Endocrinology) on contact number:
Mobile: 07825 364371 or email: thyroid.clinic@nhs.net.
Royal Berkshire Diabetes, Endocrinology Centre
Melrose House West, 71 London Road, Reading RG1 5BS

Useful websites

http://www.btf-thyroid.org/
http://www.british-thyroid-association.org/
http://tedct.org.uk/

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

V Fazal-Sanderson, RBFT Centre for Diabetes and Endocrinology, November 2026
Next review due: November 2028

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Referral to the endocrine nurse following radioiodine.

Please inform the endocrine nurse when you have had the radioiodine treatment (**during the first week**) by calling mobile number: **07825 364371**.
(To ensure a scheduled virtual follow-up appointment is made.)

Follow-up after radioiodine takes place from 6-8 months.
(The thyroid gland mostly likely will become underactive and to minimise the side effects, timely **blood test and virtual follow-up appointments are essential**.)

Blood request form and date for virtual follow-up appointment will be sent to you via post.

- **First blood test must be done at week 4, after radioiodine.**
- **First virtual follow-up will be booked for week 5, after radioiodine.**

The nurse will discuss blood test results, assess your thyroid status and make medication adjustments, if needed.
Further blood tests and virtual follow-up appointments will be scheduled for every 4-6 weeks.

You may or may not require Thyroxine replacement (Levothyroxine) after radioiodine.
The nurse will ensure that your thyroid hormones have stabilised prior to discharging you back to your GP.

Discharge recommendations for GP:
Thyroid blood test **at 3 months**; if test results stable, then **6 monthly for the first year and annually thereafter.**