

PCCA Cautions U.S. Public About Potassium Iodide Over-the-counter supplement has negative impact when misused

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HOUSTON, Mar 23, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- The Professional Compounding Centers of America (PCCA) today cautioned the public against using potassium iodide (chemical name: KI) unless facing imminent threat of exposure to nuclear radiation. Potassium iodide--an over-the-counter, non-prescription supplement--can cause side effects when used inappropriately.

"Taken inappropriately--as with any drug or supplement--potassium iodide will do more harm than good," says Gus Bassani, PharmD, PCCA Vice President of Consulting, R&D and Formulations. "When misused, potassium iodide can cause iodine toxicity--with symptoms ranging from relatively mild, such as a metallic taste and sore gums and teeth, all the way to negative effects on the thyroid itself."

"News reports of potassium iodide's role in preventing radiation exposure to the human thyroid gland, combined with speculation about the reach of radiation from Japan's nuclear plants, have led to widespread consumer purchases, particularly on the U.S. West Coast," says Jim Smith, PCCA President. "We caution the general public to speak with their pharmacist or physician before using potassium iodide."

When appropriately used in response to nuclear radiation, potassium iodide protects the thyroid gland by saturating the gland with healthy iodine, thereby preventing radioactive Iodine-131 from entering the thyroid, where it could otherwise lead to thyroid cancer or other harmful impacts. "It's crucial to understand that potassium iodide should only be used if you're directly exposed



PCCA is an industry leader providing high-quality active pharmaceutical ingredients to pharmacies that specialize in compounding medicines; potassium iodide from PCCA is pictured here.

Photo credit: Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

to nuclear radiation," says Bassani. "Inappropriate self-dosing could cause negative physical reactions."

PCCA is an industry leader providing high-quality active pharmaceutical ingredients to pharmacies that specialize in compounding (as contrasted with mass-produced and generic medications). Compounding member pharmacies carefully formulate the active ingredients into unique dosage forms that are appropriate for patients. Compounding pharmacists also work with physicians to provide personalized medications.

"We supply an extensive network of excellent and accredited compounding pharmacists," says A.J. Day, PharmD, Manager of Pharmacy Consulting. "Should the time ever arise when preventatives such as potassium iodide are called for, this network can support the public's need safely and effectively." PCCA offers the Find A Compounder™ online tool, a quick, easy service to locate member pharmacies for patients and physicians:

<http://www.pccarx.com/CompounderSearch.aspx>

Leaders at PCCA continue to closely monitor the supportive effort in Japan. "Our member pharmacists are formulating dosages as needed," says Smith, "supporting first responders with all they need to do their vital jobs in prosperity or in times of disaster. We provide the high-quality raw materials to compounding pharmacists who then help their patients and the public."

About PCCA

The Professional Compounding Centers of America (PCCA), the leader in pharmacy compounding since 1981, supports member compounding pharmacists so they can meet the unique healthcare needs of patients through our exceptional service, highest-quality products, shared innovations and education. PCCA is the nation's complete resource for fine chemicals, equipment, devices, flavors, accredited training and education, pharmacy software, marketing, business and pharmacy consulting assistance. PCCA membership includes more than 3,700 independent community pharmacists in the United States, Canada and Australia. For more information, visit PCCA online at <http://www.pccarx.com>, or use the Find A Compounder™ online tool to locate a member pharmacy in your area:

<http://www.pccarx.com/CompounderSearch.aspx>.

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