

Important Health Notice

June 1, 2009
Volume 6, Issue 12
Page 1 of 2

Information for Healthcare Professionals

Reduction in the Supply of Medical Isotopes - UPDATE

This Important Health Notice (IHN) is directed to health care providers who employ the use of medical isotopes for diagnostic procedures. This IHN and future notices are intended to provide updates and guidance in response to disruptions or potential disruptions to the supply of medical isotopes.

Status Update

On May 27th, 2009, Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL) reported that the National Research Universal Reactor at Chalk River Laboratories is expected to be out of service for at least 3 months. In light of this information, suppliers of Tc-99m, in addition to government agencies, are working to mitigate the impact that this disruption will have on those who employ medical isotopes for diagnostic procedures.

Due to pre-scheduled short-term maintenance work required at the Safari-1 reactor in South Africa, it is expected that the supply of Tc-99m for some users for the week of June 1st will be reduced. Your regular supplier should be providing you with information on whether this will affect supplies for your particular setting.

It is expected that this will be a short-term reduction in supply.

Highlights:

- The National Research Universal (NRU) reactor is offline for at least 3 months.
- The current supply of medical isotopes is expected to be further reduced for the week of June 1, 2009.
- It is recommended that health care providers continue to take steps to prolong the use of existing isotopes and to maintain contact with their referring physicians.

Further updates on the status of the National Research Universal Reactor are available at the AECL website at www.aecl.ca.

What To Do

In response to the reduction of the supply of medical isotopes, it is recommended that health care providers continue to plan for and, where necessary, implement measures outlined in the May 20th Important Health Notice and guidance materials. These are available at:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/ihn.html>

.....continued on page 2

Health care providers who employ the use of medical isotopes are encouraged to be in contact with their referring physicians to discuss patient needs and capacity over the next week and weeks to come, as the situation evolves.

To receive the Important Health Notice directly, please go to www.publichealthontario.ca

- A. In the upper right hand corner under “Important Health Notices” click on “Sign up for Important Health Notices”
- B. Fill out appropriate fields (name, address, phone/fax#, email address(es))
- C. Under question 12 “Role” select “Nuclear Medicine” (even if this is not the case, selecting this role will enable us to develop a notification list specific to medical isotopes)

For questions on Important Health Notices, please call the Healthcare Providers Hotline toll free, at 1-866-212-2272. Hours of operation are currently 0900hrs – 1600hrs, Monday to Friday.

(original signed by)

Phil Graham
Interim Director, Emergency Management Unit