

No Health Threat in LA County: The Facts about Radiation from Japan

1. What is radiation and how do you get exposed to it?

Radiation is a form of energy that's around us at all times. We're exposed to small amounts of radiation every day, from naturally occurring sources (like elements in soil) and man-made sources (like medical x-rays). Radiation can also come from radiological accidents, like the one happening in Japan.

2. Does damage to the Japanese nuclear power plants pose a health risk to LA County?

No. California is 5,000 miles away from Japan, so we do not expect to see any significant radiation increase in California's food, water, or air. The damage to the Japanese nuclear power plants does not pose a health risk to Los Angeles County.

3. Should you take Potassium Iodide (KI)?

No. There are no signs that radioactive material, including radioactive iodine, will reach harmful levels in LA or neighboring counties. There is no need for or benefit to taking KI. Taking KI unnecessarily can cause harmful side effects or allergic reactions. Only public health officials and your doctor can safely determine whether you should take KI.

4. Will radiation from Japan affect LA County's beaches?

No. Any radioactive particles in the ocean water near the damaged nuclear plants in Japan will dilute to extremely low levels before arriving in California's ocean water and are NOT a health concern to surfers, swimmers or pets at LA County's beaches.

5. What can you do right now?

Follow the tips below to prepare yourself and your community for any future disasters:

- Visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eprp/media/index.htm>
- Create emergency plans that help you get in touch with loved ones during an emergency.
- Build emergency kits for your home, work, and car.
- Meet and build relationships with your neighbors.
- Build relationships with community organizations such as neighborhood organizations, schools, and volunteer agencies in your area.
- You can also build relationships with faith-based groups such as churches, synagogues, and temples in your neighborhood.



Important Facts

1. There are no harmful radiation levels in LA County.
2. LA County's food, water, and air are safe.
3. You should NOT buy or take potassium iodide (KI) or other products to reduce risk from radiation exposure. It is not necessary and may be harmful.

Where can you go for more information?

CA Dept. of Public Health:

(916) 341-3947

Available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Spanish and English

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

(800) CDC-INFO

(800) 232-4636, available 24/7

Food and Drug

Administration:

<http://www.fda.gov>

