



NORTH MACLEAN  
**Family  
Vet**

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## I131 Therapy at NMFV

Thank you for contacting us regarding I131 Therapy at North Maclean Family Vet!

We are excited to begin our professional relationship with your practice and its vets in expanding your treatment options for cats diagnosed with hyperthyroidism.

Our goal is to work with your team to provide a treatment option that is accessible to your clients, while retaining their loyalty and bond to you and your team. Our dedicated team consults with an internal medicine specialist when needed to ensure that we are providing the best care possible for you, your clients, and your patients.

In this pack you will find client-friendly handouts that you are welcome to use. You will also find a template for how you can plan I131 Therapy for your feline patients that have been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism.

### What is I131?

I131 (or <sup>131</sup>I) is a rapidly-decaying iodine isotope that is given either orally or by injection, and is absorbed by the body and taken up by the thyroid gland. As it is taken up by the thyroid gland, the radiation destroys part of the thyroid gland, reducing its ability to produce thyroid hormones. This therapy is considered the **gold standard** in feline hyperthyroidism treatment, and is curative in most cases. In successful cases, these patients should not need on-going medications to manage their thyroid disease, and will need reduced follow-up care, compared to patients treated with “reversible” therapies (e.g. methimazole, carbimazole, and iodine-restricted diets).

I131 therapy has only been available at specialist referral centres, **until now**.

### What is involved?

Your patients will have their initial diagnosis made with your vet and team. If your clients would like to go ahead with I131 Therapy, then several tests must be performed in preparation, and certain considerations about the patient's health must be assessed. You will find a comprehensive list of results needed in the template that is included in this pack.

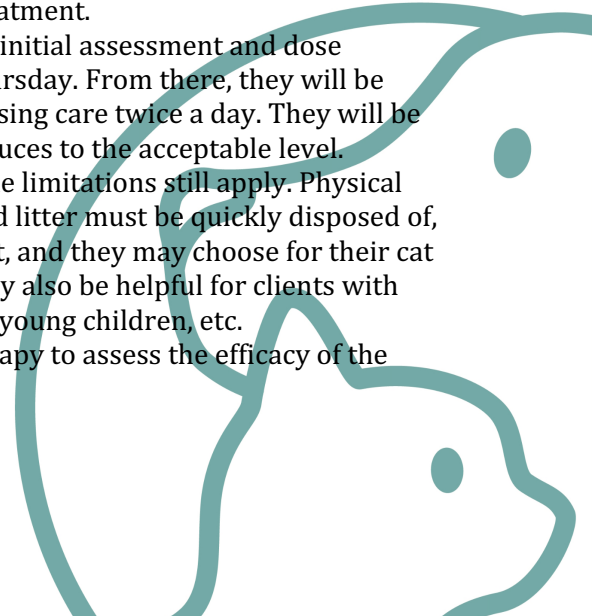
In short, we will need blood and urine testing to have been performed within 1 month of I131 treatment, along with a full clinical history and physical exam findings. Any reversible therapies (medications or food) must be stopped 1-2 weeks prior to I131 treatment.

The patient is admitted to our practice on Wednesday morning for initial assessment and dose preparation, and will then receive their I131 oral treatment on Thursday. From there, they will be housed in our lead-lined CatCapsula and will receive only brief nursing care twice a day. They will be boarded in the CatCapsula for 5-6 days until the radiation level reduces to the acceptable level.

At that stage, the patient may be discharged to their home, but some limitations still apply. Physical contact must be limited in the following 2 weeks (no cuddles, soiled litter must be quickly disposed of, etc). For some clients, this period of limited contact may be difficult, and they may choose for their cat to board with us for an additional 2 weeks in our cat ward. This may also be helpful for clients with certain health conditions such as pregnancy, immunocompromise, young children, etc.

Follow-up testing is required 1, 3, 6 and 12 months after I131 Therapy to assess the efficacy of the radioactive treatment, and assess for any complications.

*Because pets are family too*





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### What risks should be considered?

Patient selection is very important when planning I131 Therapy. Many hyperthyroid cats have concurrent health conditions, and these must be considered when planning a treatment where contact is restricted for 3 weeks.

Conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, CKD, and others may not preclude a hyperthyroid patient from I131 therapy, but must be carefully considered regarding the risk of adverse events. Should a patient be at risk for sudden decline, any additional care may not be possible for up to 7 days. Clients must be aware of these risks, and understand the implications for their cat.

### What complications do I need to be aware of?

There are three expected outcomes of I131 Therapy;

- The patient becomes euthyroid (treatment is successful)
- The patient become hypothyroid (treatment is successful but with complications)
- The patient remains persistently hyperthyroid (treatment is unsuccessful)

The patient becoming euthyroid is the most common outcome, with more than 85% of treated cats becoming stable.

5-15% of treated cats may become hypothyroid, with a proportion of them later returning to euthyroid (expected 5% or less remaining persistently hypothyroid). Some of these cases may need medication (levothyroxine) for a period of time, or permanently. However, the proportion of cases that experience this complication is expected to be low.

2-5% of cases will remain persistently hyperthyroid. In these cases, it is mostly likely that the patient has malignant thyroid neoplasia.

Our team can help you should your patient experience complications.

### How are bookings made?

Your client must contact us directly to book their cat for I131 Therapy at NMFV. Our team will ensure they have all the relevant information. Your client can either call us on (07) 3297 0803, or email our dedicated team at radiation@northmacleanfamilyvet.com.au and we will be in touch with them.

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