

SUNDAY,
SEPT. 4,
2005

A large spot of brown

Do you need iodine? Eighty percent of our American population is iodine deficient. As noted in last week's column, iodine deficiency rarely is associated with thyroid disease, particularly goiter, but commonly is associated with fatigue, aches and pains, fibrocystic breast disease, breast and prostate cancer, and a poor immune system. To tell if one has an iodine deficiency, there is a simple test. One hundred years ago, a Dr. Robb advised painting a 50 cent size area on the abdomen with iodine. The iodine stain should last 24 hours if a person is iodine sufficient. The faster the stain disappears, the bigger the iodine deficiency. The diag-



Dr. J.E.

Block

ALL THINGS
MEDICAL

nosis is also the treatment. Painting iodine on daily until it lasts 24 hours will insure iodine sufficiency. This may take many months, though. There is a better way.

Three years ago, Guy Abraham, M.D., a professor of OB/GYN at UCLA, developed an iodine test based on the following concept: the more iodine retained in the body and the less excreted in the urine after a loading dose, the more the person is in need for that element. Iodine bonds to its receptors throughout the body. If the body receptors are sufficient for iodine, a large percentage of the ingested iodine will be excreted in the urine. On the other hand, if iodine deficiency is present, the ingested iodine will be retained. A 50 mg dose of an iodine/iodide mixture (Iodoral®) and 24-hour urine specimen is collected. In an iodine deficient person 90 percent or more of the dose (or 45 mg) will be retained, and 10 percent (5 mg) will be excreted. Information on the test and Iodoral can be obtained from

the Optimox Research Corp. at (800) 223-1601. This is not paid for by third party payers and costs approximately \$350. In the future, there will be a less expensive test, hopefully paid for by insurance, that will measure salivary and/or urinary iodine, giving the diagnosis iodine sufficiency or insufficiency.

A single tablet of Iodoral will be given at 8 p.m., and a urine specimen obtained first thing the following morning and brought to the laboratory.

For \$25, you will be able to determine if you are one of the few iodine sufficient people, or of the majority of iodine insufficient folks. Then, you could take iodine, either by painting it, as noted above on the Robb's test, or orally in the form of Iodoral until you become iodine sufficient. Iodoral costs only \$20 for 60 tablets.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Views and ideas in this column do not necessarily reflect those of The Coffeyville Journal.*