

## Sophie Léonard

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www.fanc.fgov.be



#### **Program of the session**

- 14:00 14:15: Extension of the zones of pre-distribution of iodine tablets in Belgium (Sophie Léonard, FANC) 14:15 – 14:45: Health Physics: legislative revision (Jolien Berlamont, FANC) <u>14:45 – 15:15:</u> Posterior subcapsular cataract: an occupational disease (Guy Verrijdt, Fonds voor Beroepsziekten) 14:45 - 15:15Health risks and radon management in workplaces (Boris Dehandschutter, FANC) 15:15 – 15:35: *Coffee Break* 15:35 – 16:05: Exposure to natural radiation in industry and aviation (Stéphane Pépin, FANC)
- <u>16:05 16:45</u>: National dose register: status of development (Sophie Léonard, FANC)

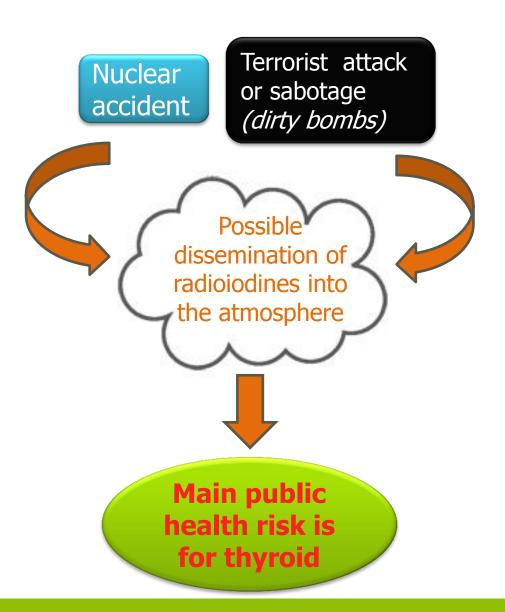


# Extension of the zones of pre-distribution of iodine tablets in Belgium

(Sophie Léonard, FANC)



## Radionuclear emergencies and the risk for thyroïd

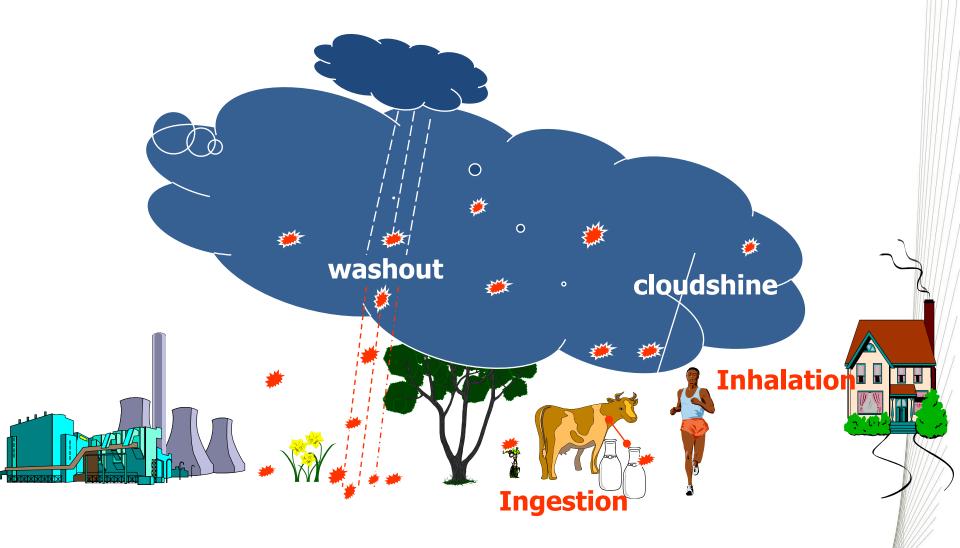






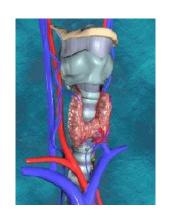


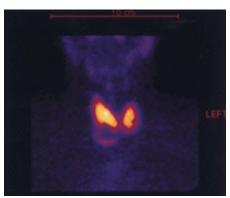
# **Exposure pathways**



# What will happen to the thyroid?

- Iodine = oligo-element: rare!
- Present in products of marine origin: fish, shellfish, seaweed...
- Belgium: bordeline iodine-deficient, gradient from coast to Ardennes
- Daily need adult 100-150 μg
- Daily need during pregnancy 250 μg
- Body « eager » to take up iodine
- Problem: no physiological distinction between iodine isotopes!

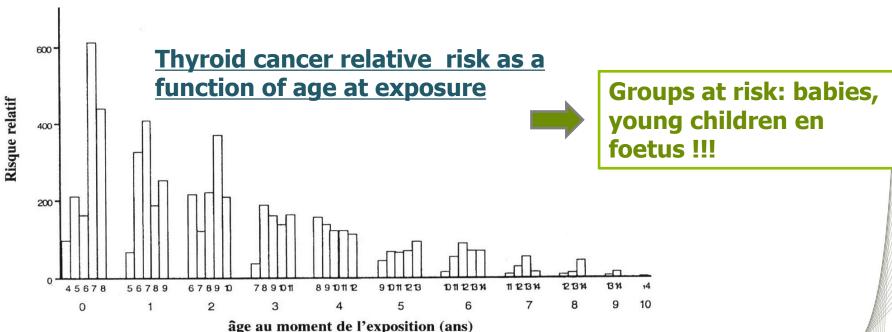






## Consequences of exposure to radioiodines?

- Iodine (whether radioactive or not) easily enters the body: GI tract, respiratory system, transcutaneous absorption
- Concentrates in thyroid (to lesser extent: salivary glands and lactating breast)
- Is stockpiled in thyroid follicles
- Thereby irradiates thyroid from inside out
- Induction of thyroid diseases, in particular thyroid cancer



#### **Protective measures**

**Sheltering** 



Confinement



Protection of thyroid (intake of stable iodine)



(if recommended)

**Evacuation** 





(but not spontaneously!)

**Decontamination** 



Food chain







## Protection of thyroid by intake of stable iodine

- Principle of action: IODINE THYROID BLOCKING (ITB)
- By (preventive) intake of a large amount of stable/natural iodine, the thyroid is saturated
- Radioactive iodines will no longer be uptaken and stored in the thyroid







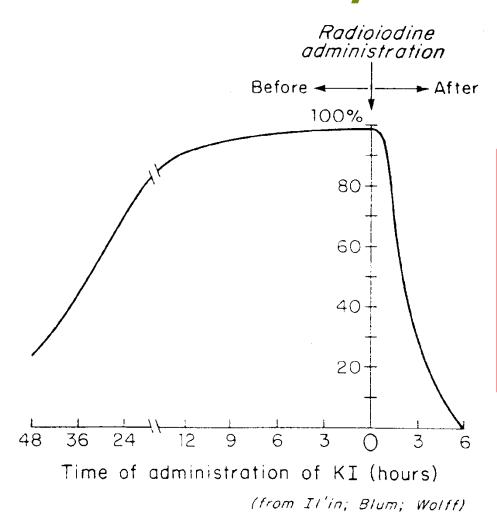
- Age (weight) dependent dosage
- Priority: young children, pregnant women
- > 40y → prior medical advice required
- One single intake!







# Intake of stable iodine: efficient and very safe .... if timely administred!



#### **REMARK:**

- Lab situation!
- In real emergency situations:
  - ✓ exposure spread in time
  - ✓ sheltering buys extra time

#### **Pre-distribution**

It is only if KI is available in houses, schools, factories,... that timely intake is possible when combined with sheltering countermeasure => **PRE-DISTRIBUTION!** 

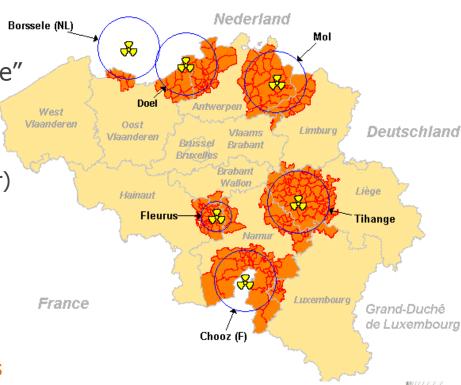
#### ≤ 20km around nuclear sites (10km around Fleurus):

• inhabitants/ collectivities invited to collect their KI tablets at their local pharmacies (for free) in "time of peace"

#### For the whole territory:

- Pharmacies should have sufficient iodine stocks (at least 500g of KI powder) to prepare emergency rations
- Stockpiles with pharmaceutical wholesalers
- Stockpiles at Civil Defense units
- National stockpile

Practical information for the population/collectivities on iodine tablets (ex: how to get it?) -> web site "nuclear risk": http://www.nuclearrisk.be/campaign-2011



#### Pre-distribution: extension of the current zones?

**Lessons learned** from accidents in **Chernobyl** and **Fukushima** 



#### 3 recent recommendations:

- > HERCA-WENRA (October 2014)
- **Belgian Health Council** (March 2015)
- > Scientific committee of FANC (January 2016)



Modalities for making KI tablets rapidly available over 100 km zones around NPP's (~ the whole Belgian territory) should be thought of/worked out



#### Pre-distribution: extension of the current zones?

# Possible approaches: currently under investigation!!!

- Nurseries, (infants)schools: pre-distribution
- Pregnant women: pre-distribution (GP's, gynaecologists)
- Progressively available to citizens, collectivities on request everywhere in Belgium
- Strategic stockpiles at Civil Protection remain
- Stockpiles in all pharmacies: tablets instead of KI powder

#### PLEASE REMEMBER: IODINE≠PANACEA

- Iodine tablets offer excellent protection (>95%), if taken timely
- Very safe product
- BUT solely protects against internal contamination with radio-iodines: combination with other protective actions required to protect against the rest





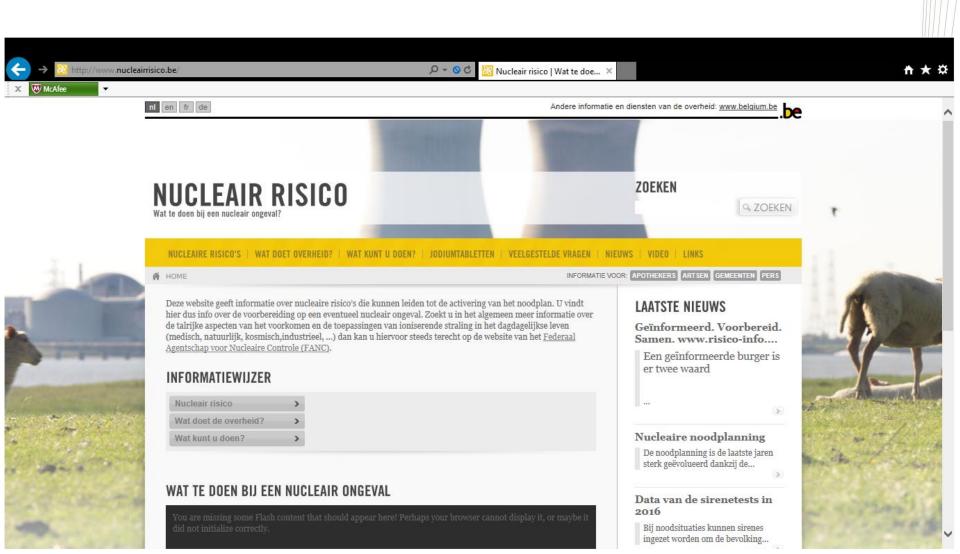
# Many thanks for your attention





# **Further reading**

www.risquenucleaire.be www.nucleairrisico.be



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#### www.risquenucleaire.be www.nucleairrisico.be

