

Discharge instructions for owners of radiotherapy-treated cats: For the first two weeks after you bring {AnimalName} home, please follow these detailed home instructions for handling your cat and litter waste.

Please note that if you cannot or will not follow these instructions, you must notify us, and we may need to keep {AnimalName} hospitalized for additional time before release (additional fees apply).

The thyroid hormone level continues to decline for 30 to 60 days after treatment. During this time, the symptoms of hyperthyroidism are expected to abate. Gradual weight gain and return to healthy body condition are expected. If your cat is showing signs of illness or depression, please contact PVESC.

Upon discharge from PVESC (after an average of 3 to 6 days after treatment, or longer if higher doses of I-131 are required), treated cats will still be excreting radioiodine in their urine, saliva, and feces. This radioiodine is in a form that can be taken up by the human thyroid where it may cause damage. Even though the level of radioactivity is much lower than the level at which human patients are released from the hospital, you must exercise caution during this period. The remaining radioactivity will be gradually eliminated from the cat over the next average of 3 to 6 days.

1. Treated cats must remain **indoors only for two weeks after discharge.**

2. Pregnant women, children under eighteen, and people with immune-mediated diseases should not have any contact with the cat or litter pan for two weeks.

3. Prolonged close contact with your cat (under 3 to 6 feet) must be avoided during this time. Limit visits to 20 minutes per session. Visit and pet your cat briefly, but do not allow the cat to sleep on your bed with you. Avoid contact with urine and saliva and do not allow the cat to sleep on your bedding.

4. Foods containing fish products can be reinstituted post-treatment.

5. Use disposable litter pan liners and plastic gloves to minimize the handling of litter/waste.

6. Wash your hands after handling your cat, its food dishes, and litter pan.

7. There is no need to quarantine your cat from other pets in the household.

8. If your cat must be seen by a veterinarian before the end of the 2-week quarantine, please alert PVESC.

While the amount of radioactive material remaining in your cat's body is low, it is prudent to follow the above instructions exactly. If this is not possible, please consider boarding your cat with PVESC during the quarantine period (additional fees apply).

Waste Disposal

Disposal of litter pan contents:

If your home is on a public sewer system:

1. Use scoopable/flushable litter such as a "World's Best Cat Litter" or Swheat"
2. Wear protective gloves (such as dishwashing gloves), scoop your litter pan twice per day, and flush the waste down the toilet.
3. At the end of the two-week quarantine, flush all remaining litter down the toilet. The litter pan and scoop can be washed with soapy water. Please flush the soap and rinse water down the toilet. It is not necessary to save these items for an extended period or to discard them.
4. This is the approved method of the State of Nuclear Regulatory Commissions.

If your home has a private septic system or if you have a public sewer and choose not to flush it:

1. Your cat's litter box must be scooped twice per day.
2. Wear protective gloves (such as dishwashing gloves) and place the waste in a Ziploc or tie bag, be sure to double-bag the litter and excretions, then place the bag in a plastic tote with a locking lid that has been lined with a large garbage bag. This tote should be stored outside (shed, garage, basement) and away from small children, other pets, and wild animals.
3. At the end of the two-week quarantine, add all of the remaining litter from the boxes to the trash bag in the outside tote, tie the bag and leave all waste for 80 days before discarding. Write the 80-day date on the bag (count 80 days from the last day of collection), and mark your calendar, to help with disposal.
4. The litter pan and scoop can be stored with the trash bag in the tote for 80 days. It can then either be thrown out or washed and reused.
5. When it is time to discard the waste, simply remove the large garbage bag from the tote and dispose of it as you would your household trash. The tote itself may be disposed of separately or can be rinsed out and reused.