Iodine 131 Encyclopedia Article

Iodine 131

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Iodine 131

A radioactive **isotope** of the element iodine. During the 1950s and early 1960s, iodine-131 was considered a major health hazard to humans. Along with cesium-137 and strontium-90, it was one of the three most abundant isotopes found in the fallout from the atmospheric testing of **nuclear weapons**. These three isotopes settled to the earth's surface and were ingested by cows, ultimately affecting humans by way of dairy products. In the human body, iodine-131, like all forms of that element, tends to concentrate in the thyroid, where it may cause **cancer** and other health disorders. The Chernobyl nuclear reactor explosion is known to have released large quantities of iodine-131 into the **atmosphere**.

See Also

Radioactivity