

No Health Threat in LA County: Addressing the Public's Concerns about Radiation from Japan

1. Does damage to the Japanese nuclear power plants pose a health risk to LA County?

No. Since California is 5,000 miles away from Japan, there will not be a significant increase of radioactive material in California's food, water, or air. In LA County, radiation levels could become hundreds of times higher and still not pose any health risks. The LA County Department of Public Health (DPH) is working closely with the scientific community across the country to monitor radiation levels and determine the local health impact.

2. Should LA County Residents purchase and take Potassium Iodide (KI) or other Iodine-containing products?

No. There are no signs that radiation, including radioactive iodine, will reach harmful levels in LA or neighboring counties. At this time, there is no benefit to taking KI or other Iodine-containing products; only risks such as life threatening allergic reactions, and other harmful side effects. DPH does NOT recommend purchasing or consuming KI.

3. Is it safe to eat food products that come from Japan?

Yes. Food products most commonly imported from Japan (like seafood, snack foods and processed fruits and vegetables) are safe to eat.

4. Is it safe to eat meat, poultry, and dairy products from livestock produced in California?

Yes. Based on current information, there is no risk to the U.S. food supply. This includes, but is not limited to, all meat, poultry, and dairy products. The FDA is working closely with the Japanese government and other U.S. agencies to ensure that our food supply remains safe.

5. Will radiation from Japan affect LA County's beaches?

No. Since California is 5,000 miles away from Japan, there will not be a significant increase of radioactive material in California's ocean water or seafood. Any radioactive particles in the ocean water near the damaged nuclear plants in Japan will dilute to extremely low levels before arriving in California's ocean water and are NOT a health concern to surfers, bathers or pets at LA County's beaches.

6. Are passengers arriving from Japan potentially contaminated with radiation that could pose a health risk in LA County?

Airline passengers arriving from Japan do not pose a health risk to others. Passengers leaving Japan and arriving in Los Angeles are being screened for radiation contamination.



Key Messages to Share with the Public

1. There are no harmful radiation levels in LA County.
2. LA County's food, water, and air are safe.
3. You should NOT buy or take potassium iodide (KI) or other products to reduce risk of radiation exposure. It is not necessary and may be harmful.

Where can the public go for more information?

CA Dept. of Public Health:
(916) 341-394,
available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Spanish and English

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention:
(800) CDC-INFO
(800) 232-4636, available 24/7

LA County Department of
Mental Health:
(800) 854-7771