

## CLINICAL TIP 121

### The “mile high” club you don’t want to join

Last year, researchers confirmed what veteran air travelers have known all along: Upper respiratory infections are one of the unpleasant realities that accompany a significant number of people off the airplane when they fly. This happens because the air in the airplane cabin is recycled throughout the course of your trip. So any germs floating around in that air are also re-circulated the whole time. Plus, the air on planes tends to be much drier, which means your nose and mouth also become dry. Without the mucous and moisture usually present to “catch” them, bacteria have a better atmosphere for setting in and causing infection. But here’s a simple tip you can use to keep yourself from joining this version of the “mile high” club.

Approximately 1/2 hour before boarding, take 10 to 15 drops of potassium iodide (SSKI) in a few ounces of water. If necessary, repeat the dose every three to four hours while you’re in the air. If you’re going on a particularly long trip—more than 12 hours—it’s best to limit the dose to 10 drops each time. And don’t take any more after landing.

The SSKI will initially accumulate in all your respiratory secretions—in your nose, throat, and lungs—where it will either kill or severely inhibit any unfriendly germs you may inadvertently inhale. And that means you’re not likely to catch a cold or other infection. You may or may not notice a slight metallic taste in your mouth, but that’s really the extent of the “side effects” for this use of SSKI.

One important note: if you’re allergic to iodine, or even suspect you might be, do not use this treatment. True iodine allergy isn’t very common, but it’s still a good idea to check to make absolutely sure. Once you are sure, this technique may save you considerable “sick time” if you travel a lot.

Potassium iodide (SSKI) is available through compounding pharmacies, some natural food stores, and the Tahoma Clinic Dispensary.

For other tips about the many, many uses of potassium iodide and important information about safety for prolonged use, see the November 2002 issue of *Nutrition & Healing*. For free access to that article, visit [www.wrightnewsletter.com](http://www.wrightnewsletter.com) and sign on with the username and password listed on page 8 of this issue.