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Surgeon General: Buying Iodide a "Precaution"
Conflicting messages appear in the effort to buy iodide tablets
 By **LORI PREUITT**
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Dramatic Photos: Devastation in Japan



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The fear that a nuclear cloud could float from the shores of Japan to the shores of California has some people making a run on iodine tablets. Pharmacists across California report being flooded with requests.

State and county officials spent much of Tuesday trying to keep people calm by saying that getting the pills wasn't necessary, but then the United States surgeon general supported the idea as a worthy "precaution."

U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin **was in the Bay Area touring a peninsula hospital.** NBC Bay Area reporter Damian Trujillo asked her about the run on tablets and Dr. Benjamin said although she wasn't aware of people stocking up, she did not think that would be an overreaction. She said it was right to be prepared.

On the other side of the issue is **Kelly Huston** of the California Emergency Management Agency. Huston said state officials, along with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the California Energy Commission, were monitoring the situation and said people don't need to buy the pills.

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News he also does not recommend getting the tablets, adding some people can be severely allergic to the iodine.

"There is no reason for doing it," **Fenstersheib** told the paper. Either way, the pills are hard to get. eBay prices have skyrocketed.

Images: Tsunami Hits California Coast



Obama's Littlest Constituents
"Even if we had a radiation release from Diablo Canyon (in San Luis Obispo County), iodide would only be issued to people living within a 10-mile radius of the plant," Huston added.
Santa Clara County's public health officer Dr. Martin Fenstersheib told the Mercury



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