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Panel agrees to distribute iodine tablets to households in advance

TOKYO, Dec. 25, Kyodo

A panel under Japan's nuclear regulatory body broadly agreed Tuesday to distribute iodine tablets to households living close to nuclear power plants in advance.

The panel on medical system in case of emergency exposure is considering covering households within a 5-kilometer radius from a plant to be prepared with iodine pills, which will help prevent residents from developing thyroid cancer. It will also discuss whether people in a 30-km range need the same measure.

The panel plans to reach an official decision on the issue by next March to reflect it in the country's nuclear disaster control guidelines, which were compiled in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident last year.

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