(5) Problems in Nuclear Medicine from the Governmental Point of View

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Nuclear Medicine (NM) in the industrialised world is regarded from two points of view: that of the user, i.e. physician and patient who expect a benefit to health from its application, and that of the governmental or professional bodies responsible for protecting the public from undue or excessive radiation exposure. This opens the questions of safe handling of radionuclides; reliability of equipment, radioactive waste disposal; the need for compulsory education and training, and finally, licensing, quality control, etc.

Consideration of both viewpoints can occasionally result in conflicts which necessitate a compromise. Particular attention should be paid to educational standards as these will determine the quality of work. The various parameters are discussed.

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(7) Present Status of Department of Nuclear Medicine of Seoul National University Hospital

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The Department of Nuclear Medicine of the Seoul National University Hospital started as the Radioisotope Clinic in April, 1960, which made the medical application of radioisotopes possible for the first time in Korea. At the beginning, thyroid function tests and ferrokinetic studies were the main tasks for the Radioisotope Clinic, but after establishment of a photoscanner (Magner-scanner) in 1964 and a scintillation camera (pho-gamma III) in 1969 with the aid of International Atomic Energy Association, scanning of various organs in the body could be performed. Radio-immunoassay technique was used for the research purposes and clinical application from 1969, and dynamic studies of the organs with computarized analysis were made possible after the computer system (Gamma 11) were established in March, 1979.

Today the Department of Nuclear Medicine of Seoul National University Hospital is comprized of a chairman (Professor of Internal Medicine), two staff doctors, three residents, two interns, 11 technicians, one nurse and 6 other personnels. And the Department of Nuclear Medicine is equipped with 4 scintillation cameras, one color scanner and a computer system (Gamma 11) etc. in the imaging section, and 3 automatic gamma counters, one automatic liquid scintillation counter and a radiochromato scanner etc. for the in-vitro measurement.

In the imaging section, about 660 scans (liver scan 265, thyroid scan 230, renal scan 41, bone scan 48, cardiac scan 35 etc.) are performed for the thirteen organs in the body per a month, and in the in-vitro section, the monthly radioimmunoassay measurements amount to about 3600 tests for 26 items including serum T_4, T_3 -RIA, T_3 RU, HBs Ag, alpha fetoprotein, TSH etc.. Besides these, the number of radioactive iodine treatments for thyroid diseases, ^{32}P administration for hematological diseases, ferrokinetic stidies. Cobalt excretion test and Schilling test are reaching about 30 cases per month. And the total number of various tests and treatments performed in the Department of Nuclear Medicine of the Seoul National University Hospital amount to about 4300 cases per month while the amount of radioisotopes consumed is about 2250 mCi for about 40 kinds of radiopharmaceuticals among which ^{99m}Tc and ^{131}I predominate. More than 25 research papers are coming out from the Department of Nuclear Medicine in a year and 363 articles have been published since 1960 when the Radioisotope Clinic was established in the Seoul National University Hospital.