

### 3. Nuclear Medicine in Thailand

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Nuclear Medicine was first introduced in Thailand in Siriraj Hospital in 1955. Since then Nuclear Medicine has played an important role in a combat for iodine deficiency in the country and established progressive activities with clinical departments. The practice of nuclear medicine entered the modern age with a rigorous initiation of nuclear cardiology in 1985. By 1995 the number of SPECT units in the country has amounted to 14 in governmental hospitals and 2 in private clinics. Tc-99m, Tl-201, I-131, and I-125 are major radionuclides used in Thailand. The Office of Atomic Energy for Peace (OAEP) of Thailand supplies concentrated I-131 solution, I-131 diagnostic capsules, instant Tc-99m pertechnetate, and pharmaceutical kits at a lower cost than those imported. Most hospitals also buy Tc-99m generators from Australia, U.K., or France to supplement the inadequate local supply of Tc-99m. As there is no cyclotron in the coun-

try, all cyclotron produced radionuclides such as Tl-201 and Ga-67 are imported. I-131 treatment for hyperthyroidism and thyroid carcinoma are routinely carried out in major hospitals. Recently Sm-153 EDTMP for bone pain therapy has been initiated in Siriraj Hospital since early 1995. It is locally produced by the OAEP.

The Nuclear Medicine Society of Thailand is only 8 years old. There are 128 members comprising nuclear medicine physicians and scientists. The Society holds 3 scientific meetings in a year. Foreign guest speakers usually participate in the Annual Meeting. Proffered papers presented in English are welcome.

Nuclear Medicine in Thailand is gradually expanding. All major hospitals in the metropolis are well equipped with high technology equipment. There has been a motive to establish nuclear medicine centres in provincial hospitals.