



NCAPIP
National Council of Asian
Pacific Islander Physicians

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The National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians is witnessing with the rest of the world the devastating impact of the earthquake, ensuing Tsunami, and nuclear plant crisis in Japan. Our hearts and prayers go out to the Japanese people during this time of crisis.

The communities we serve have a unique relationship to the Japanese people. Many Asian Americans can claim Japan as their ancestral home, and many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have relatives, friends, and business associates in Japan, and travel frequently to the affected regions.

As physicians who serve the API community, we feel it is important to provide our patients with accurate and reassuring information about travel to Japan and any potential risk of radiation exposure related to the nuclear plant shutdown in Daiichi.

As of today, the risk of any radiation exposure related to the nuclear plant emergency is negligible to people residing in the United States and in areas outside of a defined geographic radius of the plant. There have been some reports of individuals in the United States purchasing iodine tablets and using them as a preventive measure to protect the thyroid gland from radiation exposure. Iodine is a medication and should only be taken under a physician's direction. We urge all patients who are concerned about their risk and contemplating the use of iodine to consult their physicians first.

Travel to Japan has been significantly curtailed not only because of some concern of radiation spreading to other parts of Japan outside of the immediate area of Daiichi, but also because of the severely compromised transportation and energy structure. NCAPIP advises our communities that non-essential travel to Japan be postponed until the crisis is contained.

Finally, we wish to direct concerned individuals that wish to help Japan during this crisis to the Japan Relief Fund, organized by Japanese Medical Society. This disaster fund provides a place for concerned individuals and organizations to make tax-deductible donations that will help victims rebuild their hospitals and medical systems in the hardest hit areas. An online monetary contribution can be made at: <http://www.jmsa.org/latest/earthquake-relief-fund.html>.