

Instructions for the use of Iodine when Purifying Water

When in the wilderness, find a flowing water source if possible. Collect water with one water bottle by dipping the bottle in the water. If a flowing water source is not available, collect water from the largest, clearest water source.

Pour the water from the full water bottle into the empty water bottle, being careful not to drip any of the water onto the outside rim of the empty water bottle. If collecting water from a faucet, only one bottle is needed -- just be careful not to splash any water on the rim of the bottle. Water that touches the rim of a bottle will not be purified by the iodine and will still carry contaminations.

Calculate how much iodine is needed to purify the water. Consider the source of the water and the amount of water. When using 2 percent liquid iodine, five drops from an eyedropper should be added for each quart if the water is clear and from a flowing source. If the water is cloudy or from a stagnant source, use 10 drops. If using tablets, use two tablets per quart.

Let the water sit for 30 minutes, longer if the water was less than 68 degrees Fahrenheit. As temperature drops below 68 degrees Fahrenheit, iodine purification becomes less effective. Water can be warmed by letting it sit in the sun.

Shake the water and iodine solution thoroughly.

Let solution stand an additional 30 minutes if the water used was especially cloudy, or if it came from a highly contaminated source. The Center for Disease Control states that iodine can be just as effective as chlorine if allowed to sit long enough.

Add a small amount of lemon juice or lemonade powder to help neutralize the bitter taste of the iodine.

Only drink iodine treated water for a few weeks at a time. Any chemical purification is intended for short-term use only.