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## U.S. SENATOR JOE LIEBERMAN CONNECTICUT

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### **Lieberman Urges Study Of Radium Treatment; Former Patients Should Be Notified Of Potential Risks**

Senator Says "Atomic Bloodletting" Involved Tens Of  
Thousands, Including Many Children

WASHINGTON, DC -- Senator Joe Lieberman today urged the Administration to conduct a thorough study of radium treatments given to tens of thousands of people, many of them children, in the 1940's to the 1960's.

The radium nasopharyngeal irradiation treatments involved placing a radium-tipped rod into patients' nasal cavities to alleviate ear and adenoid problems. "A number of people who received the radium treatment later developed cancer where the radium came in contact with their body," said Senator Lieberman. "We need to find out for sure if the radium caused the cancer, and we also need to get the word out to all those who received the treatment to visit their doctor and be examined for any ill effects."

Senator Lieberman, chairman of a nuclear regulation subcommittee, has been urging agencies of the federal government to conduct an epidemiological study of the radium treatment. "The procedure was like an atomic age bloodletting, with the cure worse than the disease," Senator Lieberman said.

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Senator Lieberman credited a citizens organization, the Submarine Survivors Group, with setting up a hotline that has received calls from more than 54,000 people, most of whom underwent the radium treatments and are now concerned about adverse health effects.

In a hearing of Senator Lieberman's subcommittee today, the Senator urged the Veterans Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Defense Department and the Centers for Disease Control to work together to identify any links between radium treatments and disease, and to notify doctors and former patients about the potential problems associated with radium treatments. "To me, the best evidence of the danger of radium treatment is the fact that no doctor in his right mind would think of performing this procedure today," said Senator Lieberman.

Along with children, former patients included military personnel, such as divers, submariners and airmen, whose work subjected them to ear problems that resulted in the radium treatment.