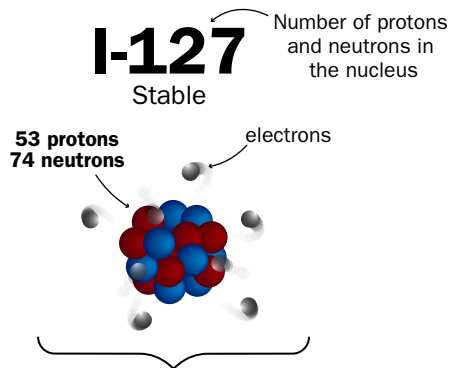
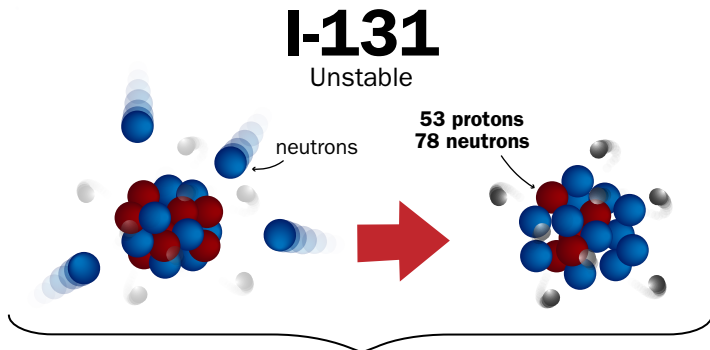


What is a radioisotope?

An isotope of an element occurs when an atom has the correct number of protons but varies in neutrons. Isotopes that have an unstable nucleus because of the imbalance of protons and neutrons are considered radioactive isotopes, or **radioisotopes**. Iodine can be used as an example for how an element can be stable and unstable.



In order to be stable, iodine must have the “correct” number of neutrons in its nucleus.



When four more neutrons are added to a stable nucleus to create another form of iodine, it becomes unstable and therefore is considered a radioisotope.