

## Symptoms of HP

If you have had pituitary surgery, cranial radiation treatment, or have had an injury to the pituitary gland, you may experience the following symptoms and could have HP:

- Low energy level
- Decreased physical activity
- Difficulty concentrating or loss of memory
- Moodiness or difficulty relating to others
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Loss of interest in sexual activity

You should talk to your endocrinologist if you have these symptoms to further evaluate whether you have a pituitary hormone deficiency.

## Treatment for HP

The goal of treatment is to increase the hormones that are deficient to a normal, healthy level.

The type of treatment given will depend on which hormone(s) you are deficient in.

Hormone replacement therapies include:

- Growth Hormone (humatrope, saizen, genotropin, omnitrope),
- Thyroid (thyroxine),
- Cortisol (hydrocortisone),
- Sex hormones (testosterone or estrogen replacement therapy), and
- Anti-diuretic hormone (Desmopressin).

Low levels of prolactin do not normally need treatment. If prolactin levels are too high, this can be treated with bromocriptine, cabergoline, or quinagolide.

# HYPOPITUITARISM (HP)

## FAMILY AND PATIENT GUIDE



St. Paul's Hospital and  
Vancouver General Hospital's  
Neuropituitary Program

Vancouver, British Columbia

Let's work together to make a  
difference!

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## Contact Information

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### Also ask us for these materials:

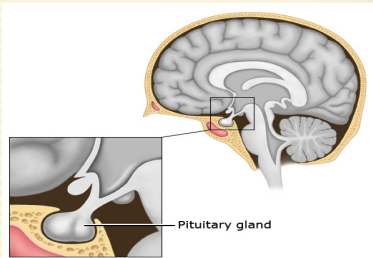
- The Hypopituitarism record book
- Growth Hormone Deficiency workbook
- Medication Guidelines & coverage
- Adrenal insufficiency book
- Hypopituitarism lab tests
- Transsphenoidal Surgery
- Endocrine links & support groups
- Travel letter

Adapted from:  
Hormones & You. **The Hormone  
Foundation.**  
[www.hormone.org](http://www.hormone.org)

# Hypopituitarism and You

## What is Hypopituitarism?

Hypopituitarism is a disorder in which the hormones produced by the pituitary gland- growth hormone, sex hormones, cortisol, thyroid, and anti-diuretic hormone, are not functioning properly. This can cause an imbalance or deficiency in important hormones in our bodies. With prolactin, another hormone produced by the pituitary, hypopituitarism actually causes an increase in the secretion of prolactin.



**Note:** Low levels of cortisol, or adrenal insufficiency, can be a medical emergency, especially during times of stress or illness. A medical alert bracelet should be worn and cortisol replacement therapy given immediately.

## What causes Hypopituitarism?

### Pituitary Adenoma

A **non-cancerous** tumour in the pituitary gland is called a pituitary *adenoma*. Hypopituitarism is often encountered as a result of surgical treatment to remove this non-cancerous tumour. Other causes can be the result of an injury to the pituitary gland from head trauma or from cranial radiation therapy.

### How is Hypopituitarism diagnosed?

If hypopituitarism is suspected, your doctor will order some blood tests to check your hormone levels. These tests include checking your growth hormone and/or IGF-1, thyroid (TSH/FT4), cortisol (24 hour urine cortisol and/or AM cortisol test), prolactin, and sex hormones (FSH/LH, testosterone or estradiol). The type of tests ordered will depend on your physical symptoms.

## Other Resources

- [www.hormone.org](http://www.hormone.org) or call 1-800-467-6663
- The Endocrine Society ([www.endosociety.org](http://www.endosociety.org))
- Pituitary Network Association (<http://www.pituitary.org/intro.aspx>)
- <http://www.cnetcanada.org/index.html>
- [www.rarediseases.org](http://www.rarediseases.org) (National Organization for Rare Disorders)
- [www.pituitary.org.uk](http://www.pituitary.org.uk) (The Pituitary Foundation)
- [www.pituitarydisorder.net](http://www.pituitarydisorder.net)
- [www.pituitarysociety.org](http://www.pituitarysociety.org)
- [www.endocrineweb.com](http://www.endocrineweb.com)
- [http://www.hgfound.org/res\\_adultsgrowthormone.html](http://www.hgfound.org/res_adultsgrowthormone.html)
- [http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/patient\\_education/pepubs/mngadrins.pdf](http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/patient_education/pepubs/mngadrins.pdf)

**You are not alone with your hypopituitarism**

