

Pituitary Adenoma

What is a Pituitary Adenoma?

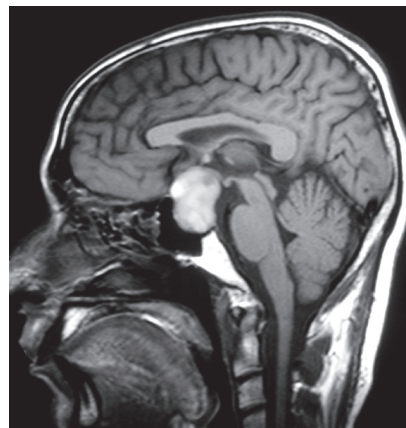
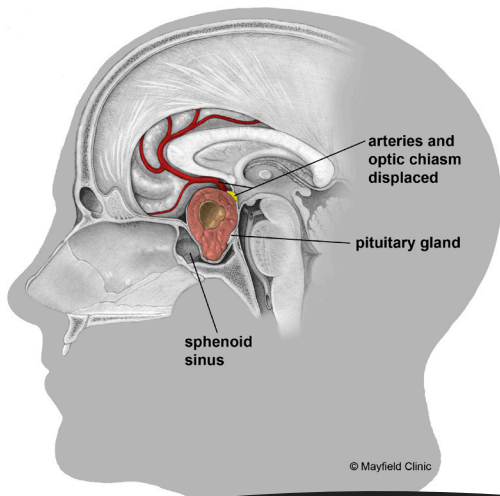
- Benign (not cancerous) tumor that grows from the pituitary gland.
- Can be slow or fast growing and interfere with normal hormone secretions.

What are the symptoms?

- **Functional tumors** secrete abnormal levels of hormones and may cause:
 - Prolactin-secreting – loss of normal menstrual period, lactation in men or women, infertility
 - ACTH-secreting (Cushing's syndrome) – weight gain, osteoporosis, diabetes
 - Growth Hormone-secreting – enlargement of hands, feet or skull, peripheral nerve symptoms, carpal tunnel syndrome, diabetes, heart failure
 - TSH-secreting – hyperthyroidism with weight loss, sweating, increased activity
- **Nonfunctional tumors** grow until their size and mass effect cause headache, vision changes, nausea and vomiting

What are the treatment options?

- **Medication** – Some tumors (especially prolactin-secreting tumors) can be treated with medications alone. An endocrinologist can help treat hormone levels.
- **Surgery** – Removal of the tumor can be curative. Typically performed through the nose and sphenoid sinus with an endoscope to allow smaller, less invasive approach.
- **Radiation** – Option for residual or recurrent tumor. Occasionally, radiation is an option for initial tumor if surgery cannot be performed. Radiation can be a single treatment (radiosurgery) or multiple treatments (fractionated radiotherapy) depending on tumor size and closeness to structures such as the optic nerves.



MRI scan of a pituitary macroadenoma.

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