

We produce newsletters which

- Contain items of medical interest to patients with pituitary conditions
- Publicise activities of interest to members, including what is occurring at branches in other states
- Provide an outlet to health professionals for publication of research writing and information

We have a website which

- Contains medical articles on pituitary conditions
- Has a secure patient member log-in for
 - Access to the contact support register
 - Closed communication forum
 - Back copies of newsletters
 - Various information resources

We conduct patient /health professional education seminars which

- Offer the opportunity to listen to and ask questions of medical specialists
- Provide insight into unique and complex pituitary conditions
- Discuss treatments and hormone replacements
- Supply information on conditions associated to or linked with pituitary disease

We facilitate patient and family social gatherings which

- Allow patients, supporters and families to meet and talk with others, learn from their stories, and alleviate the feeling of isolation
- Periodically have a guest speaker in an informal setting

We are involved in advocacy which

- Supports the submission for Growth Hormone to be listed on the PBS for adults
- Demonstrates pituitary awareness to GP's and the general public which in turn may lead to a shorter diagnostic period thus ensuring quicker medical treatment and better outcomes.

Membership is offered to pituitary patients, carers and health professionals.

Membership is \$30 (AUD) and is due for renewal at the end of the financial year, 30th June.

If you would like to find out more please email support@pituitary.asn.au contact your state co-ordinator below, or phone **1300 331 807** Alternatively you can join online, download a membership form from our website www.pituitary.asn.au or request one by writing to **PO Box 570 Mt. Ommaney QLD 4074**

FOUNDATION CONTACTS

NATIONAL

Phone: 1300 331 807

Email: support@pituitary.asn.au

CHAIRPERSON

Email: chairperson@pituitary.asn.au

SECRETARY

Email: support@pituitary.asn.au

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ACT Email: act@pituitary.asn.au

For more information on state contacts visit our website www.pituitary.asn.au or write to PO Box 105 Kellyville NSW 2155

The information in this pamphlet has been reviewed by Prof. Steven C. Boyages, Sydney West Area Health Service, University of Sydney, in conjunction with Assoc. Prof. Patricia Crook, John Hunter Hospital, University of Newcastle. The APF gratefully acknowledges their generous input & support.

PITUITARY AWARENESS



AUSTRALIAN PITUITARY FOUNDATION

The APF's mission is to provide support to those who have experienced pituitary gland conditions. We promote awareness and disseminate information helpful to the medical community, public, pituitary patients and their families.

support@pituitary.asn.au

www.pituitary.asn.au

ABN 13 088 357 902



Australian Pituitary Foundation Ltd

The Australian Pituitary Foundation Ltd was founded in Sydney in 1994 by pituitary patients and family members, with the endorsement of Australian endocrinologists, neurosurgeons, radiation therapists and endocrine nurses, who saw the need to support people who have rare conditions of the pituitary gland. After five years the APF developed into a company with benevolent status, limited by guarantee. In October 2003, The Children's Growth Foundation (CGF) joined the APF, and the APF is continuing to support families of children affected by pituitary disorders.

The objectives of the Foundation are to

- Provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas and for the discussion of problems related to pituitary disorders
- Promote public awareness of pituitary disorders and the need for government support
- Act as a resource group providing support and disseminating information
- Encourage scientific research for the prevention, alleviation, care, treatment and cure of pituitary disorders.

Funding

Funds for the purposes of striving towards our objectives come from membership fees, donations and sponsorship. Members who join help not only themselves but the Foundation as well. Corporate sponsors are always very welcome. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

The Pituitary Gland - What Is It?

The pituitary gland is commonly referred to as the master gland because of the roles it plays in controlling the function of all aspects of the body's vital endocrine system. It is a soft reddish brown pea sized gland encased in a protective box in the skull located at the base of the brain and appends from the brain by a stalk called the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus is a messenger to the pituitary gland which then secretes hormones through the blood to a collection of glands within the body. These glands produce complex hormone signals which define the differences between male and female, regulate growth in childhood, control metabolism, body composition, vitality, emotions, sexual maturity and reproduction, our sex drive and virtually make life worth celebrating.

What Can Go Wrong?

- Tumours of the pituitary gland or surrounding area
These tumours are usually benign
- Partial or multiple pituitary hormone deficiency
- Abnormal pituitary gland development
- Inflammation of the pituitary gland, such as from autoimmunity or an infection
- A complication of childbirth - Sheehan's Syndrome
- Head injury
- Damage to the pituitary gland by radiation

The pituitary secretes many important hormones that have different effects on other glands in the body. When the pituitary gland is not working correctly, many things can go wrong. Often the symptoms may be mild, non specific and gradual in onset.

When To Seek Diagnosis?

The Foundation encourages people to recognise their own symptoms and seek appropriate treatment. If you think you might have a pituitary disorder speak with your health professional and ask him to refer you to an Endocrinologist (a specialist in hormones). Pituitary disorders are relatively rare but complicated conditions that require specialist coordinated health care. Health providers, patients and those who interact with them, all benefit from a greater understanding of the intricacies and management of pituitary disorders.

The time between onset of a pituitary disorder and diagnosis can be many years resulting in gradual but continuous decline in a person's well-being. Once diagnosed, patients and carers often feel isolated due to a lack of contact with others in a similar situation, overwhelmed or confused by the new diagnosis and treatment decisions. This is where the Australian Pituitary Foundation can help.

