



FIG 28-1 Principal anterior and posterior pituitary hormones and their target organs. *FSH*, Follicle-stimulating hormone; *LH*, luteinizing hormone. (From Patton KT, Thibodeau GA: *Anatomy and physiology*, ed 8, St Louis, 2013, Mosby/Elsevier.)

Hormones

A hormone is a complex chemical substance produced and secreted into body fluids by a cell or group of cells that exerts a physiologic controlling effect on other cells. These effects may be local or distant and may affect either most cells of the body or specific “target” tissues. Most hormones are released by the endocrine glands into the bloodstream, and production is regulated by a feedback mechanism (see [Table 28-1](#)). The master gland of the endocrine system is the anterior pituitary. The pituitary is responsible for stimulation and inhibition of tropic hormones. Other hormones, such as insulin, are not regulated by the pituitary gland.