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Addison Disease

Also called: Adrenal insufficiency, Adrenocortical hypofunction, Hypocortisolism

Your adrenal glands are just above your kidneys. The outside layer of these glands makes hormones that help your body respond to stress and regulate your blood pressure and water and salt balance. Addison disease happens if the adrenal glands don't make enough of these hormones.

A problem with your immune system usually causes Addison disease. The immune system mistakenly attacks your own tissues, damaging your adrenal glands. Other causes include infections and cancer.


Symptoms include:

- Weight loss
- Muscle weakness
- Fatigue that gets worse over time
- Low blood pressure
- Patchy or dark skin

Lab tests can confirm that you have Addison disease. If you don't treat it, it can be fatal. You will need to take hormone pills for the rest of your life. If you have Addison disease, you should carry an emergency ID. It should say that you have the disease, list your medicines and say how much you need in an emergency.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases





Start Here

- **Addison's Disease** [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/addisons-disease/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/enfermedad-de-addison-es/?adfree=true>]
- **Adrenal Insufficiency** [<https://www.endocrine.org/patient-engagement/endocrine-library/adrenal-insufficiency>]
(Endocrine Society)
- **Adrenal Insufficiency and Addison's Disease** [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/endocrine-diseases/adrenal-insufficiency-addisons-disease>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/enfermedades-endocrinas/insuficiencia-suprarrenal-enfermedad-addison>]

Symptoms

- **Addison's Disease: Symptoms and Causes** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/addisons-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20350293?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/addisons-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20350293?p=1>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Adrenocorticotrophic Hormone (ACTH) [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/adrenocorticotrophic-hormone-acth/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/hormona-adrenocorticotropica-acth/>]
- Aldosterone Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/aldosterone-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-aldosterona/>]
- Cortisol Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/cortisol-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-cortisol/>]
- Renin Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/renin-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-renina/>]



Treatments and Therapies

- Addison's Disease: Diagnosis and Treatment [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/addisons-disease/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20350296?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/addisons-disease/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20350296?p=1>]

Genetics

- Autoimmune Addison disease: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/autoimmune-addison-disease/>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Addison's Disease [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Addison's+Disease%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Adrenal Insufficiency [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Adrenal+Insufficiency%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Female fertility and pregnancy in autoimmune Addison's disease - a mini... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40607215>]
- Article: Increased risk of osteoporotic fractures and osteoporosis in patients with Addison's... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40190018>]
- Article: Pregnancy Outcomes in Women With Primary Adrenal Insufficiency: Data From a... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40159596>]
- Addison Disease -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Addison+Disease%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Endocrine Society [<https://www.endocrine.org/>]
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/>] 

Patient Handouts

- ACTH blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003695.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003695.htm>]
- ACTH stimulation test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003696.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003696.htm>]

- Acute adrenal crisis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000357.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000357.htm>]
- Addison disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000378.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000378.htm>]
- Cortisol blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003693.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003693.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

17-hydroxycorticosteroids urine test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003459.htm>]

24-hour urinary aldosterone excretion rate [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003621.htm>]

ACTH blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003695.htm>]

ACTH stimulation test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003696.htm>]

Acute adrenal crisis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000357.htm>]

Addison disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000378.htm>]

Cortisol blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003693.htm>]

Cortisol urine test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003703.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Adrenal Gland Disorders [<https://medlineplus.gov/adrenalglanddisorders.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Addison Disease* is the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>]

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