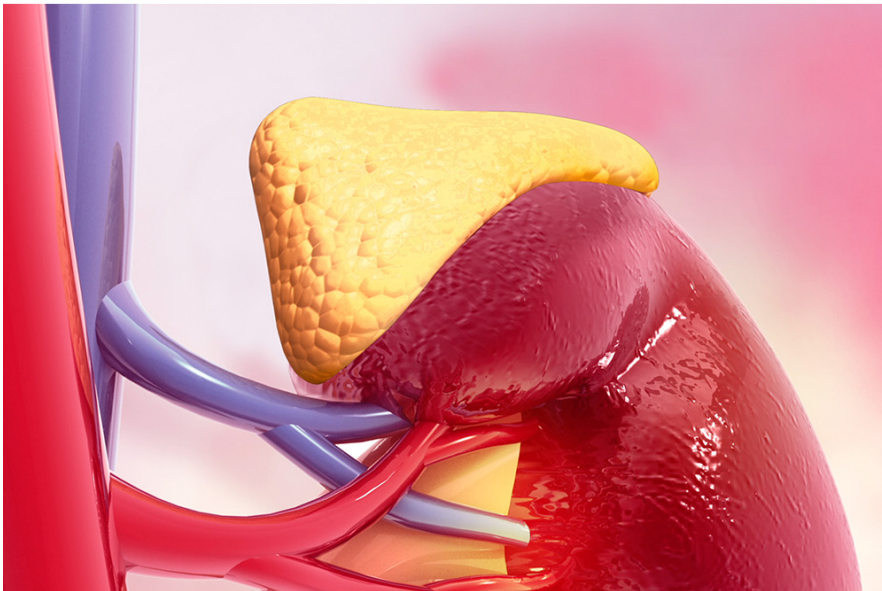




What Do the Adrenal Glands Do?



Overview

This pair of glands is found in your abdomen. We also call them the "suprarenal" glands, because they sit on top of the kidneys. But what do they do, exactly? Let's take a look at your adrenal glands.

Healthy adrenals

Healthy adrenals are triangle-shaped. They're each about the size of a fortune cookie. Although they're attached to the kidneys, they're not part of the kidneys. Your kidneys are part of your urinary system. But the adrenals are part of the endocrine system. That's the system that makes and controls your hormones.

The adrenals' role

Adrenal gland hormones regulate many of your body's processes. They affect your metabolism. That's the process your body uses to convert food into energy. The adrenal glands play a role in your sleep cycle. They help regulate blood pressure. They help control how your body responds to stress. And, they have many other functions.

Life without adrenal glands

If one of your adrenal glands becomes diseased or damaged, we can take it out with surgery. You can live a normal life with only one adrenal. But if you lose both of these glands, you will need to take hormone supplements for the rest of your life. For more info, talk to your doctor.