

WALK WITH WAPO THIS OCTOBER FOR PITUITARY AWARENESS MONTH AND LEARN ABOUT

CUSHING'S DISEASE

Cushing's syndrome is an endocrine disorder characterized by the over production of cortisol. This can be caused by either excess ACTH from the pituitary gland due to a pituitary tumor (**Cushing's disease**) or independent over-production of cortisol from a tumor on the adrenal glands (Cushing's syndrome).

01

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE

- Red, puffy and round (moon) face
- Weight gain around chest & tummy
- Increased fatty tissue on back of neck and above clavicles
- Depression, anxiety, brain fog
- High blood pressure
- Prediabetes, diabetes
- Easy bruising and purple stretch marks on skin
- Osteoporosis
- Muscle weakness and thin arms and legs
- Increased risk for infections and blood clots
- Low libido
- Menstrual irregularities

"My first symptoms didn't seem obvious to me; mild weight gain with no dietary changes, high blood pressure and some brain fog!"



02

DIAGNOSIS IS BASED ON

- Presence of symptoms
- Blood and urine tests with high cortisol levels
- Pituitary MRI
- Petrosal Sinus Sampling
- Abdominal scan

"If I could change one thing it would have been to be diagnosed quicker and treated sooner. It changed my life and I lost around 7 years being sick."



03

MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT

- Surgical tumor removal
- Medical therapies
- Radiation therapy

"I always make sure that I get enough sleep, exercise regularly and do enough fun things. This is how I stay balanced!"

"My biggest concern is a recurrence of the tumor. Watching my health and keeping up with regular labs can help catch it if it were to begin."



04

LONG-TERM CHALLENGES

- Cushing's disease may be controlled after treatment, but comorbidities such as cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, risk of blood clots and lung infections, psychological disorders and cognitive decline may remain and need to be addressed.
- Recovery of normal hormone balance after surgery takes time and recurrence of the tumor is possible, which can be a source of worry.
- Early screening and diagnosis is essential to reduce long-term comorbidities.

"I wish people knew that struggling with Cushing's is an incredibly hard and painful journey - not just physically but mentally."



World Alliance of
Pituitary Organizations

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