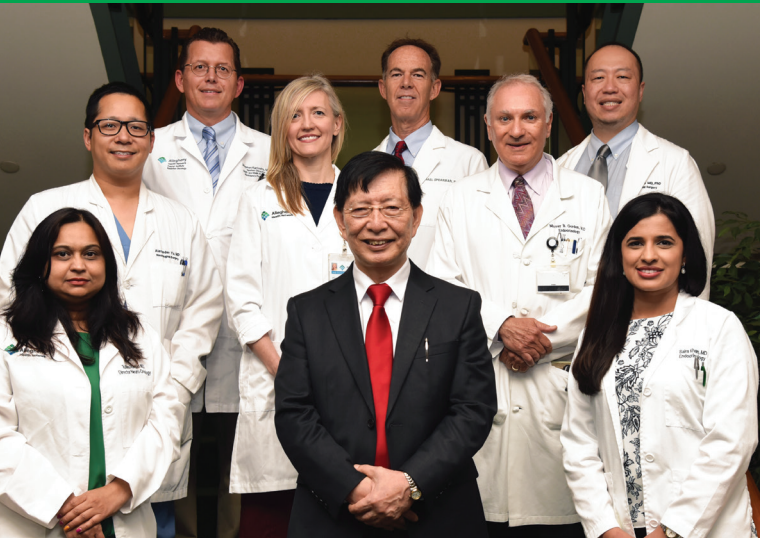




Allegheny
Health Network

AHN Pituitary Center

Outstanding and exemplary care
in one convenient location



Allegheny Health Network (AHN) is setting a new standard for your care. Our doctors take a team approach to provide customized treatment plans according to your unique situation.

Allegheny Health Network (AHN) complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex in its health programs and services. In order to treat individuals in a nondiscriminatory manner, AHN provides free communication aids and language assistance services.

ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. (412) 330-2400

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (412) 330-2400

注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 (412) 330-2400



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Allegheny Health Network Pituitary Center

The AHN Pituitary Center provides specialized, convenient, and comprehensive care for individuals with pituitary and neuroendocrine disorders. Your care team includes experts in:

- Endocrinology
- Neuro-oncology
- Neurosurgery
- Radiology
- Otolaryngology
- Radiation Oncology
- Ophthalmology

Your body's hormone control center

Your pituitary gland is the size of a garbanzo bean (chickpea) — it sits at the base of your brain. It communicates with other glands that control hormones for stress, growth, reproduction, thyroid function, and other functions.

Too many or too few hormones disrupt the balance in your body. This balance is necessary to keep your body in proper working order.



Pituitary tumors

There are about 10,000 pituitary tumors diagnosed each year in the United States. Most of them are benign (called "adenomas"). This means they aren't cancerous and don't spread to other parts of the body.

We evaluate lesions to determine whether the pituitary gland is functioning normally and what hormones, if any, the tumor is secreting. The tumor may impact other organs near the gland, like your optic nerve, which may cause visual changes or vision loss.

You may have other endocrine disorders:

- Elevated prolactin levels. Prolactin is a hormone that stimulates milk production after childbirth.
- High cortisol levels that cause excessive weight gain in your midsection and upper back (Cushing syndrome).
- High growth hormone levels, causing excessive bone growth in your feet, hands, and face (acromegaly).
- Low pituitary hormones (hypopituitarism).

Symptoms of pituitary disorders

Not all pituitary tumors cause symptoms. The first sign of a tumor usually depends on whether the tumor is functional (making excess hormones) or non-functional (not making excess hormones).

Symptoms may include:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Weakness
- Unexplained weight loss or weight gain
- Feeling cold
- Vision problems or vision loss

Evaluation

- Lab testing to learn whether the pituitary gland is functioning normally or if too many or too few hormones are produced.
- Endocrine evaluation to determine treatment for glands that aren't functioning at their best.

Other exams, depending on the results of the initial testing, are:

- Eye exam (in cases of larger tumors or cysts) to be sure there is no vision loss from the tumor pressing on the optic nerve.
- Neurosurgical consideration to remove the tumor.
- Ear, nose, and throat (ENT) exam if surgery is needed.

Treatment

Treatment depends on whether the tumor makes too much of a hormone and, if it does, which hormone it makes.

Treatment options include:

- Surgery
- Medicines that block tumor hormones or help prevent problems caused by these hormones



Surgery

Often surgery to biopsy or remove pituitary tumors is performed endoscopically, approaching through the nose and sinuses directly to the pituitary gland. Called "endoscopic endonasal transsphenoidal surgery," this surgery is performed by a team of dedicated neurosurgeons and ENT surgeons. Some surgery requires a cut or incision in the scalp. We remove a portion of bone temporarily to create a pathway to the pituitary gland.

Medical

Sometimes a combination of treatments is used. For example, surgery may remove some of the tumor, while medication may relieve symptoms and sometimes shrink the remaining tumor.

The AHN Pituitary Clinic is located at:

Allegheny General Hospital
320 East North Avenue
South Tower, Suite 208
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

To schedule an appointment,
call **412-359-8246**.