

# Pituitary hormone

The anterior [pituitary gland](#) produces the following hormones and releases them into the bloodstream:

## Adrenocorticotrophic hormone

growth hormone, which regulates growth, metabolism and body composition

luteinising hormone and follicle stimulating hormone, also known as gonadotrophins. They act on the ovaries or testes to stimulate sex hormone production, and egg and sperm maturity

prolactin, which stimulates milk production

thyroid stimulating hormone, which stimulates the thyroid gland to secrete thyroid hormones. Each of these hormones is made by a separate type of cell within the pituitary gland, except for follicle stimulating hormone and luteinising hormone, which are made together by the same cell.

Two hormones are produced by the hypothalamus and then stored in the posterior pituitary gland before being secreted into the bloodstream. These are:

anti-diuretic hormone (also called vasopressin), which controls water balance and blood pressure

oxytocin, which stimulates uterine contractions during labour and milk secretion during breastfeeding. Between the anterior pituitary and the posterior pituitary lies the intermediate pituitary gland. Cells here produce:

melanocyte-stimulating hormone, which acts on cells in the skin to stimulate the production of melanin.

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Last update: **2024/06/07 02:56**

