

Climb National Information Centre for Metabolic Diseases



Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia – 3 Beta Hydroxysteroid Dehydrogenase

Other names that may be used for this condition are:

- 3 β -HSD

Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) refers to a group of disorders where there is impairment in the function of the adrenal glands. The adrenal glands sit on top of each kidney. They produce three essential steroid hormones, which are cortisol (stress hormone), aldosterone (salt-retaining hormone) and androgens (a group of male sex hormones). The production of these hormones is stimulated by the pituitary gland located in the brain.

Treatment of this disorder includes replacing the lack of cortisol with hydrocortisone, prednisolone or dexamethasone. This will mean that normal development and onset of puberty should occur. Often medical intervention is required for puberty. The lack of aldosterone in those classed as salt losers must be replaced with flurocortisone to maintain salt and water balance in the body. The replacements of these steroid hormones must be continued daily for life. In times of stress, illness and surgery extra cortisol replacement is usually needed.

This information is fully sourced and referenced, for more detailed information and references please contact CLIMB by email, letter or telephone.

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Climb is the only charity in the United Kingdom that provides support on all
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