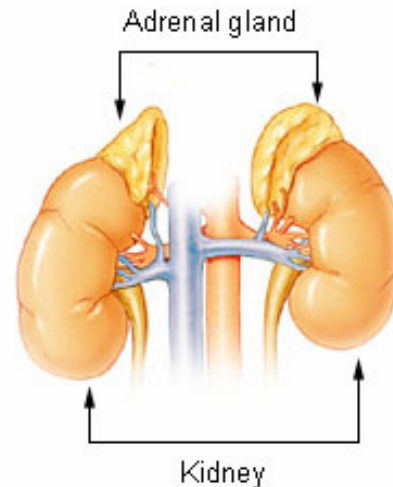


# ADRENAL NODULES

Adrenal Nodules (also called Adrenal Masses, Adrenal Lumps, or Adrenal Incidentalomas) are very common and are almost always benign (i.e., not cancerous). They are usually found by accident on a scan (e.g., CT scan, MRI scan, or ultrasound) done for another unrelated medical reason.

People have two adrenal glands, located on top of each kidney (see illustration). Adrenal nodules occur on these glands.

Nodules less than 3 centimeters (1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches) are the most common ones found and almost always are benign. Nodules more than 6cm (2 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches) tend to be of more concern and generally require more intensive investigation. Nodules of 3-6 cm are intermediate in terms of risk and require regular follow up. When there is a nodule present, there are generally no symptoms.



Most of the time, your doctor or health care provider will order tests to make sure the adrenal glands are not making too high of a level of hormones. These tests may include blood tests and urine tests. In some cases, you may also take a pill at night followed by a blood test done the next morning.

In most cases, test results show up as normal. Your doctor or health care provider will generally suggest a repeat adrenal scan to be done in about 6 months. If that test shows that the adrenal gland is the same size, then generally no further testing is advised.

It is important to remember that most of the time (over 95%) adrenal lumps are not worrisome and need no treatment after the initial evaluation. However, if the adrenal nodule is producing excessive hormones, growing, or very large (>6 cm), then an operation may be advised to remove the adrenal gland with the nodule. This operation can usually be done laparoscopically through very small incisions in the abdomen and side.



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