

## How cortisol works

- **Blood pressure:** Cortisol helps maintain blood pressure.
- **Blood sugar:** Cortisol helps maintain blood glucose levels.
- **Immune function:** Cortisol helps regulate immune function.
- **Inflammation:** Cortisol helps reduce inflammation.
- **Fight-or-flight response:** Cortisol helps trigger the body's fight-or-flight response.
- **Metabolism:** Cortisol helps increase the body's metabolism of glucose.

## How cortisol levels are regulated

- The pituitary gland, located at the base of the brain, regulates the amount of cortisol released by the adrenal glands.
- Cortisol levels naturally fluctuate throughout the day.
- Stress causes a rise in cortisol production, but this increase is usually temporary.

## What happens when cortisol levels are too high or too low?

- **Too much cortisol:** Can cause fatigue, irritability, headaches, weight gain, and more
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- **Too little cortisol:** Can cause Addison's disease, which can cause fatigue, muscle weakness, weight loss, and more