



Useful factors of Pediatric Endocrinology

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Introduction

Pediatric Endocrinology transcends the whole of endocrinology as it relates to infants, children, and adolescents. Hence the decision to devote a standalone volume to the subject in this second edition of the Encyclopedia. Now there is logic in collating topics uniquely specific to pediatrics together with those of an endocrine organ nature where the adult counterpart covered in addition in relevant sections of the other four volumes. Pediatric endocrinology evaluations are often accompanied by requests for laboratory tests. Each clinician must determine the correct lab test to be ordered, establish the circumstances for proper testing (e.g., fasting, time of day, stimulation protocol), and choose a specific laboratory method to be utilized. The evaluation of laboratory assays is an essential component of pediatric endocrinology practice. One could suggest that of all specialties in medicine, pediatric endocrinology is the one most dependent on laboratory tests. Recent advances in information technology are also changing the physician, hospital, and laboratory interaction. Similar to computer-computer interfaces, laboratory web-based information systems for ordering testing and receiving results are now increasingly available. These systems may reduce certain types of errors while potentially creating others. These analyzers consolidate more than 20 to 30 hormone or other assays on a single platform that can operate in batch or random access mode with unattended capability, timely turnaround, and cost-effective throughput. Despite these practical advantages, there are some challenges to consider. A general principle

of pediatric endocrinology is that the earlier the manifestation of either underactivity or excess hormone function, the more likely the cause is to be a genetic disorder with possible structural abnormalities. More subtle defects in endocrine function may appear later in childhood, but still have a genetic basis, for example, hypogonadotropic hypogonadism. This entity may be considered at birth in male infants because of underdeveloped penile and testicular size, but often does not become manifest or discovered until delayed puberty is investigated. Hormones are chemicals that affect how other parts of the body work. For example, hormones decide how a child grows and matures. Endocrine glands, such as the pituitary gland, release hormones into the bloodstream. Endocrinology is the science that studies these glands and the effects of the hormones. Problems seen by pediatric endocrinologists are often quite different from those commonly seen by endocrinologists who care for adults. Special training in pediatric conditions as they relate to growth and development is important. Hormonal problems are often present for life. Pediatric endocrinologists deal with hormone disorders at all stages of childhood and the teen years. Pediatric endocrinologists practice in a variety of medical settings including children's hospitals, university medical centers, large community hospitals, as well as private offices throughout the country. Your pediatrician can help you find a board-certified endocrinologist. Children are not just small adults. As growing individuals they have special needs related to growth and development. In addition, their psychological needs are different from those of adults. Hormone problems affecting growth or sexual development can have significant effects on a child's physical and emotional well-being. Pediatric endocrinologists are sensitive to these issues. A pediatric endocrinologist cares for your child in a setting that is appropriate for children and teens. Support personnel, including nurses, psychologists, pediatric diabetes educators, and nutritionists, are all attuned to the needs of children and teens. Children with special needs require that pediatric endocrinologists work closely with primary care pediatricians to provide coordinated and comprehensive care. Pediatric endocrinologists have extensive training and expertise in dealing with children and in treating children with endocrine disorders and hormonal problems.