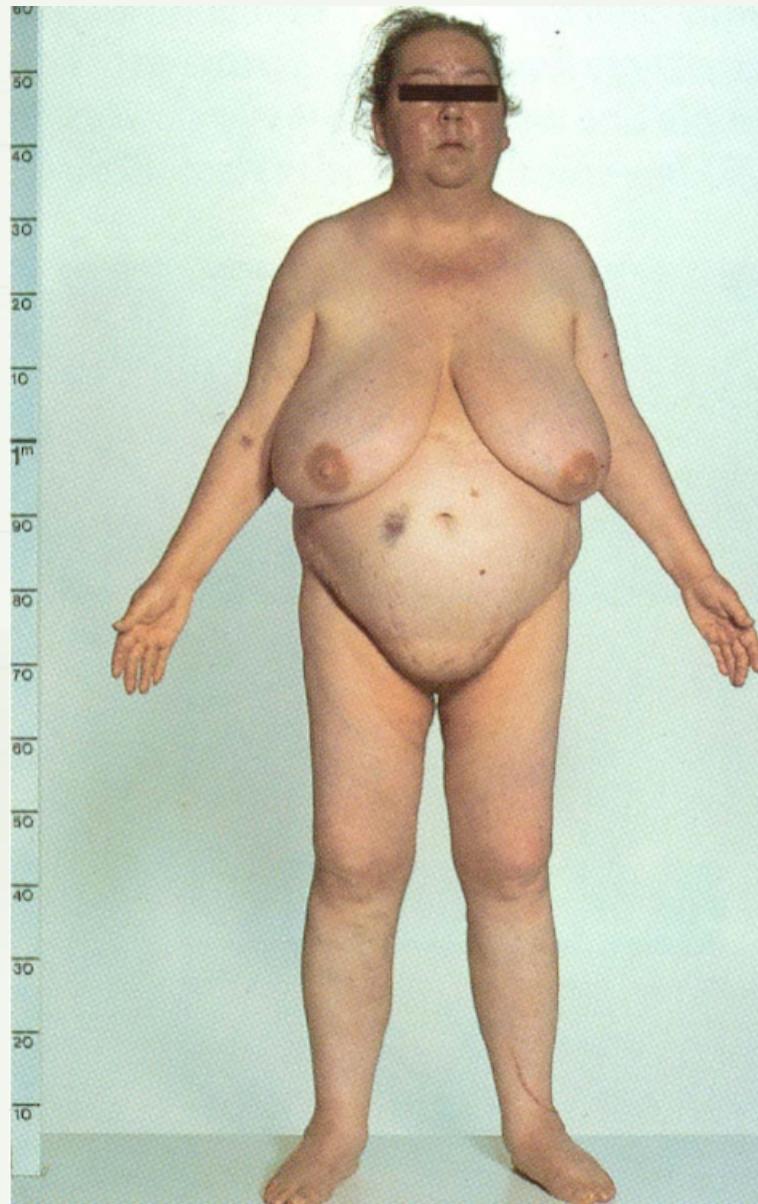


Cushing's Syndrome



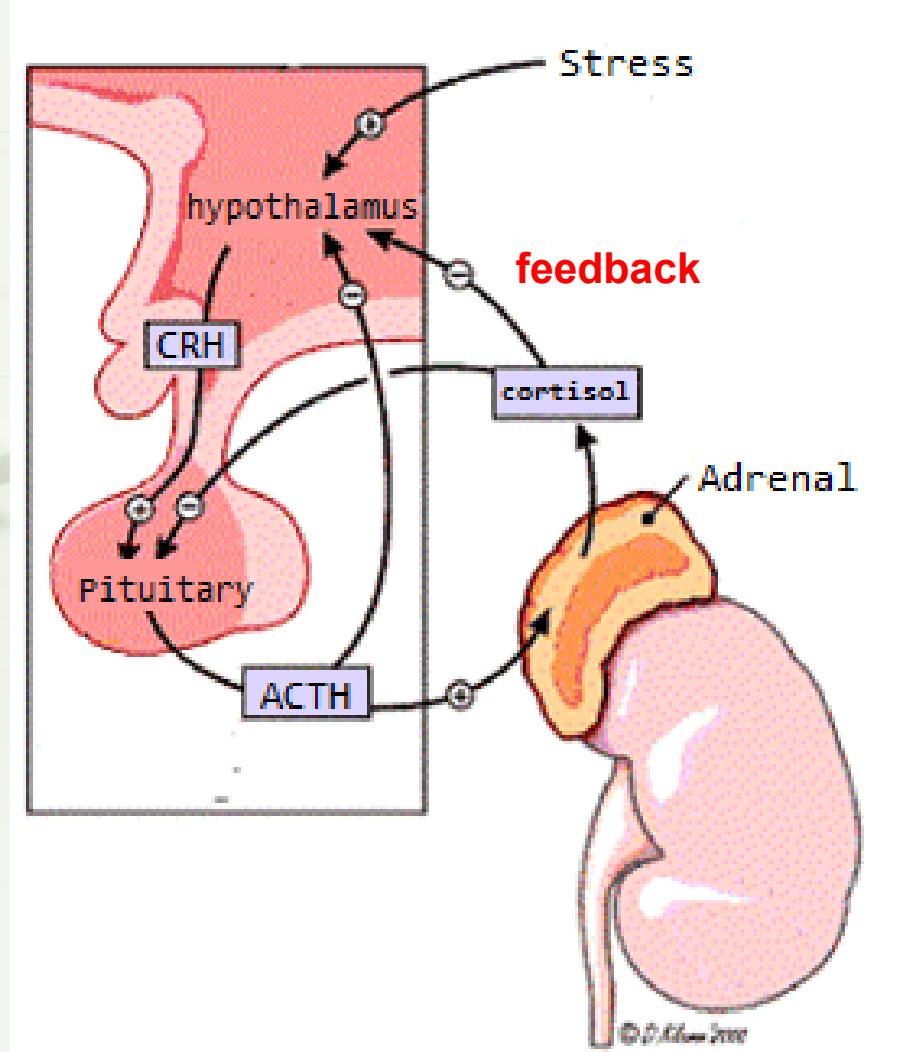




Definition

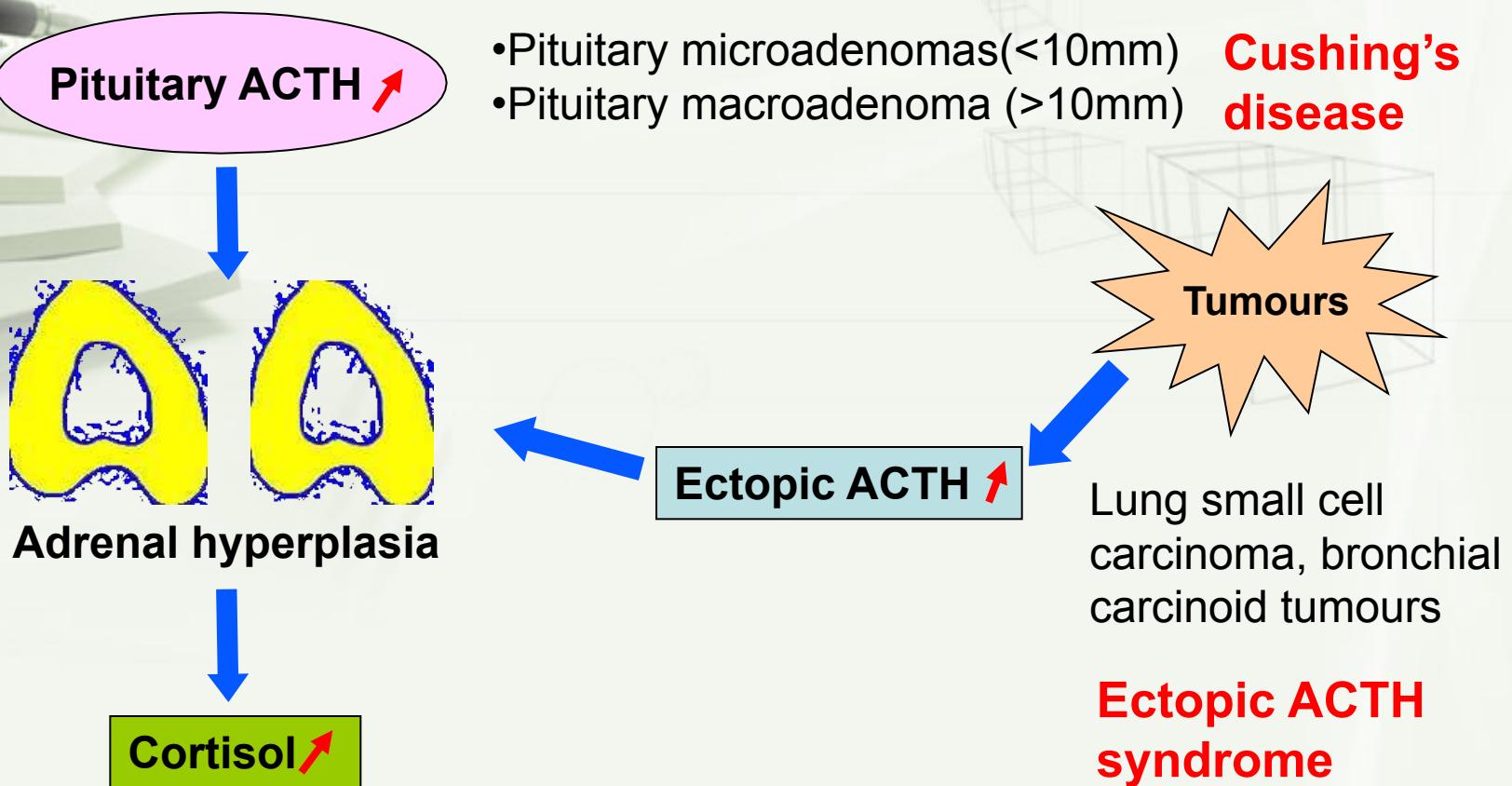
Cushing' s syndrome is caused by chronic exposure to excess glucocorticoids (cortisol), characterized by **truncal obesity, Round face, Plethora, Hirsutism, Violaceous striae, Hypertension, etc.**

The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis



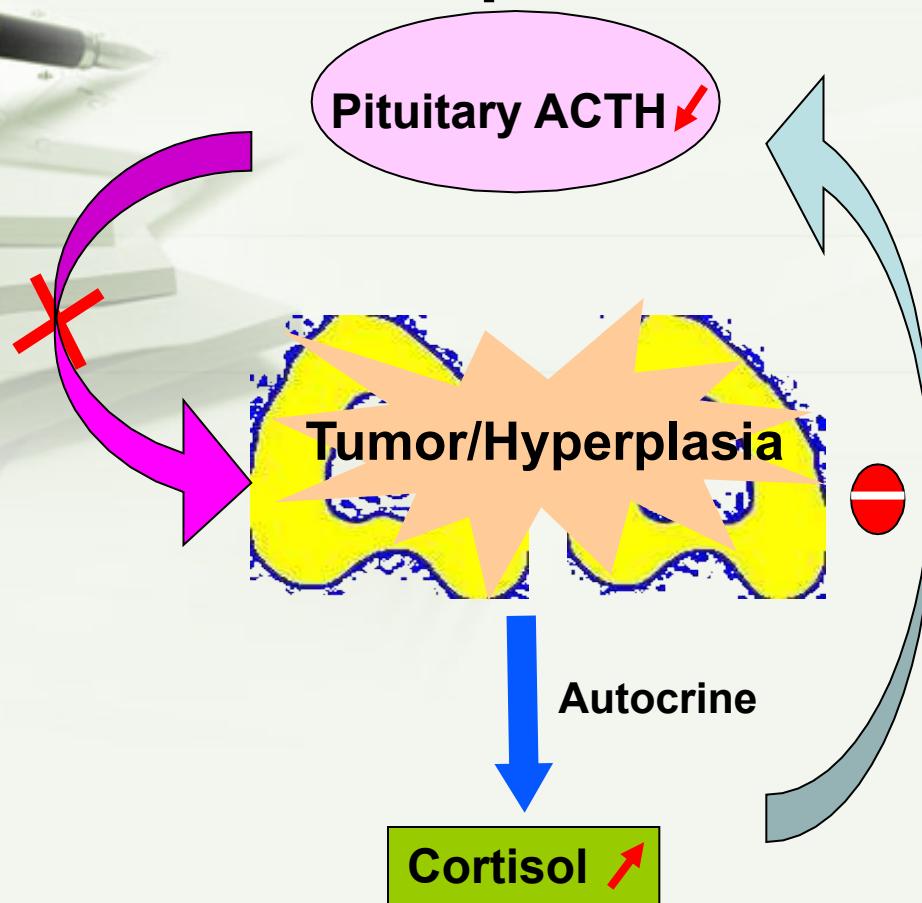
Cause of Cushing's syndrome

1. ACTH-dependent



Cause of Cushing's syndrome

2. ACTH-independent



- Adrenal adenoma
- Adrenal carcinoma
- Micronodular adrenal hyperplasia (<5mm)
- Macronodular adrenal hyperplasia (>5mm)

Epidemiology

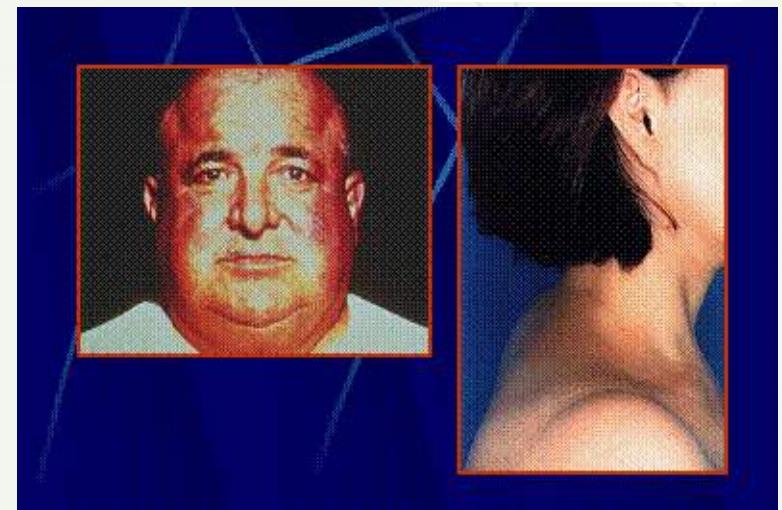
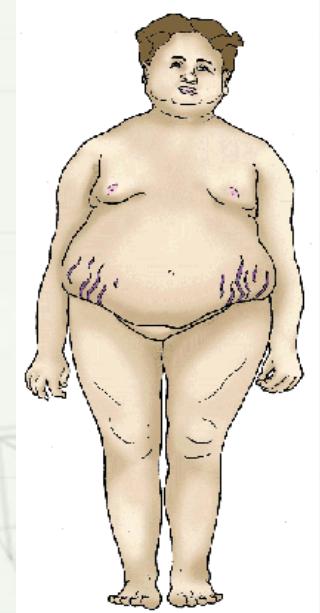
Cushing's disease: Women:men=4:1

Ectopic ACTH syndrome: Women:men=1:1

**Adrenocortical adenoma/carcinoma:
Women:men=4:1**

Pathophysiology and Clinical Signs

- Metabolism (Glucose, Lipid, Protein)
- Immune system
- Blood system
- Reproductive system
- Central nervous system



1. Typical habitus

Peculiar distribution
of adipose tissue

Truncal obesity

“Moon” face

“Buffalo” hump

Protein catabolism ↑

Violaceous striae

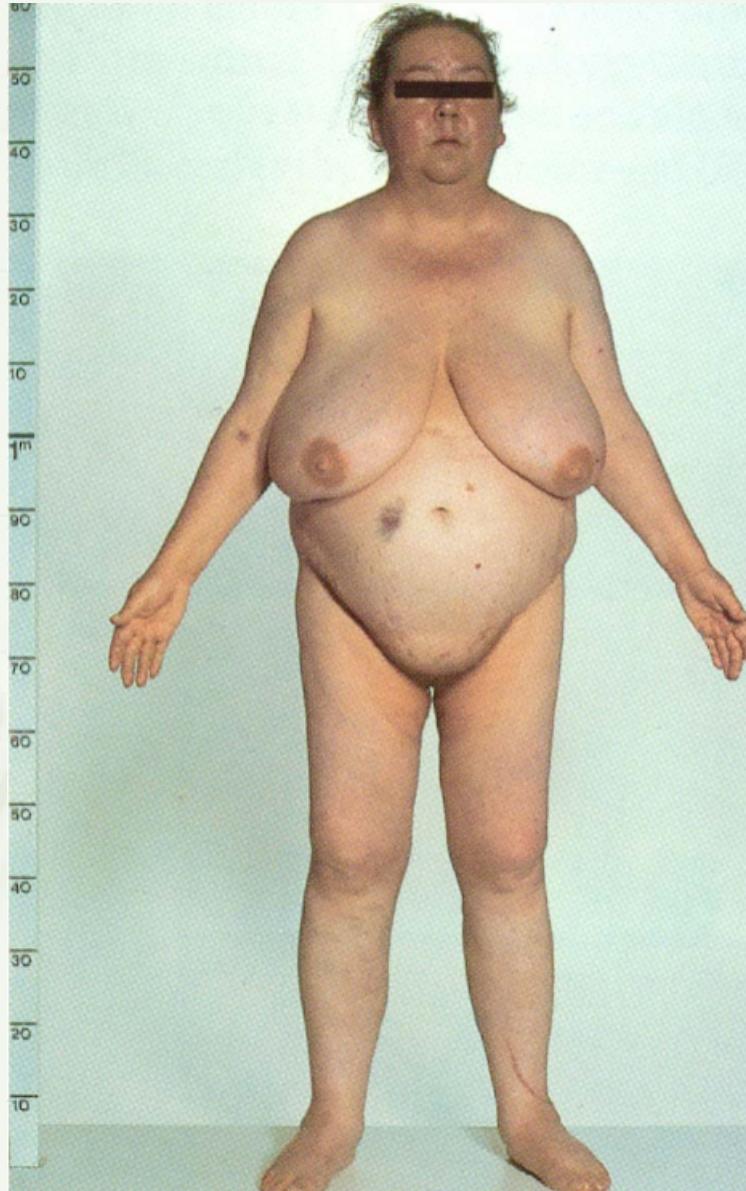
Bruisability

Osteoporosis

Red blood cells ↑

Plethora

✓ Truncal obesity



✓ Moon face

✓ Plethora



✓ Buffalo hump



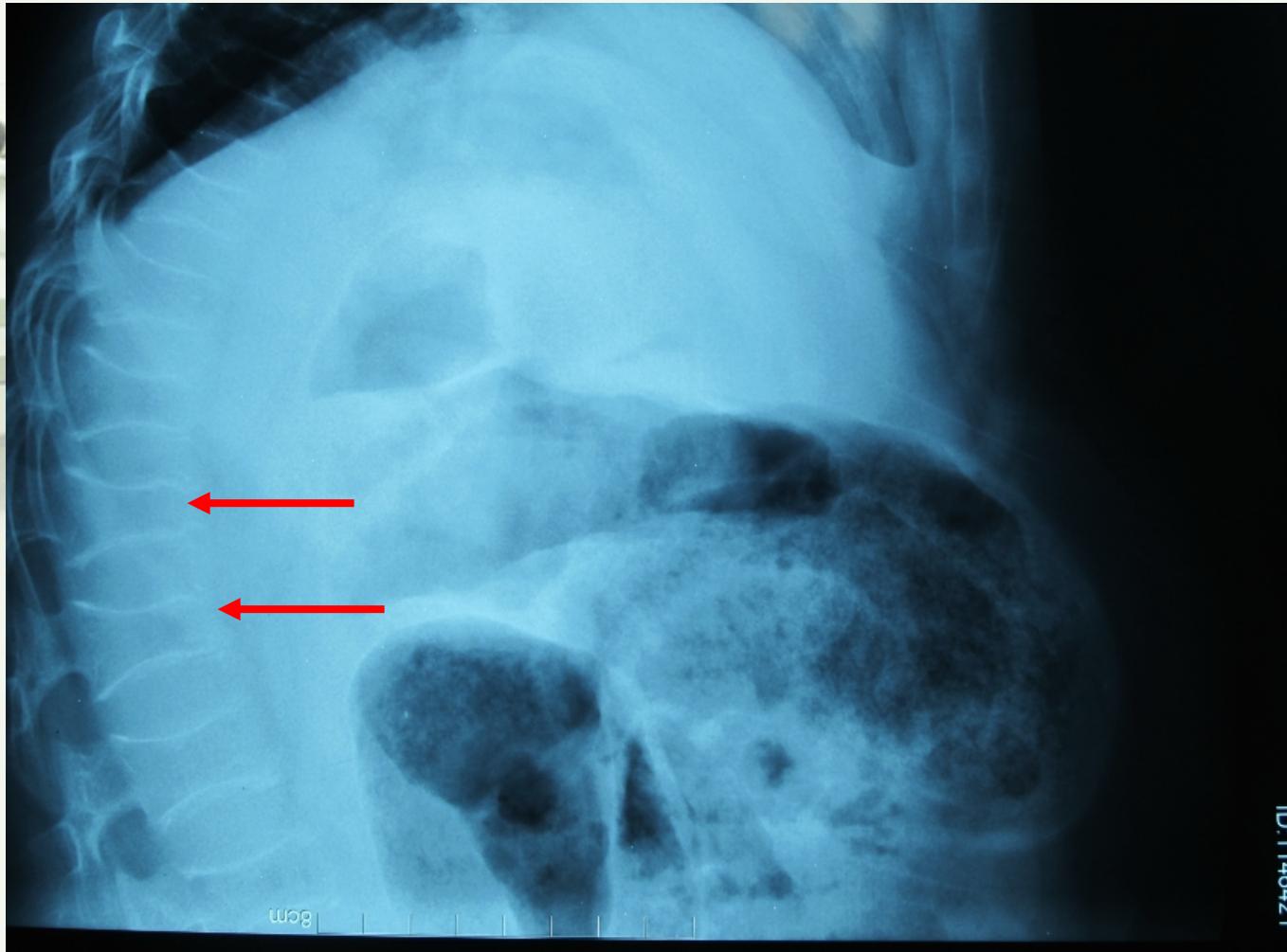
✓ Violaceous striae



✓Violaceous
striae



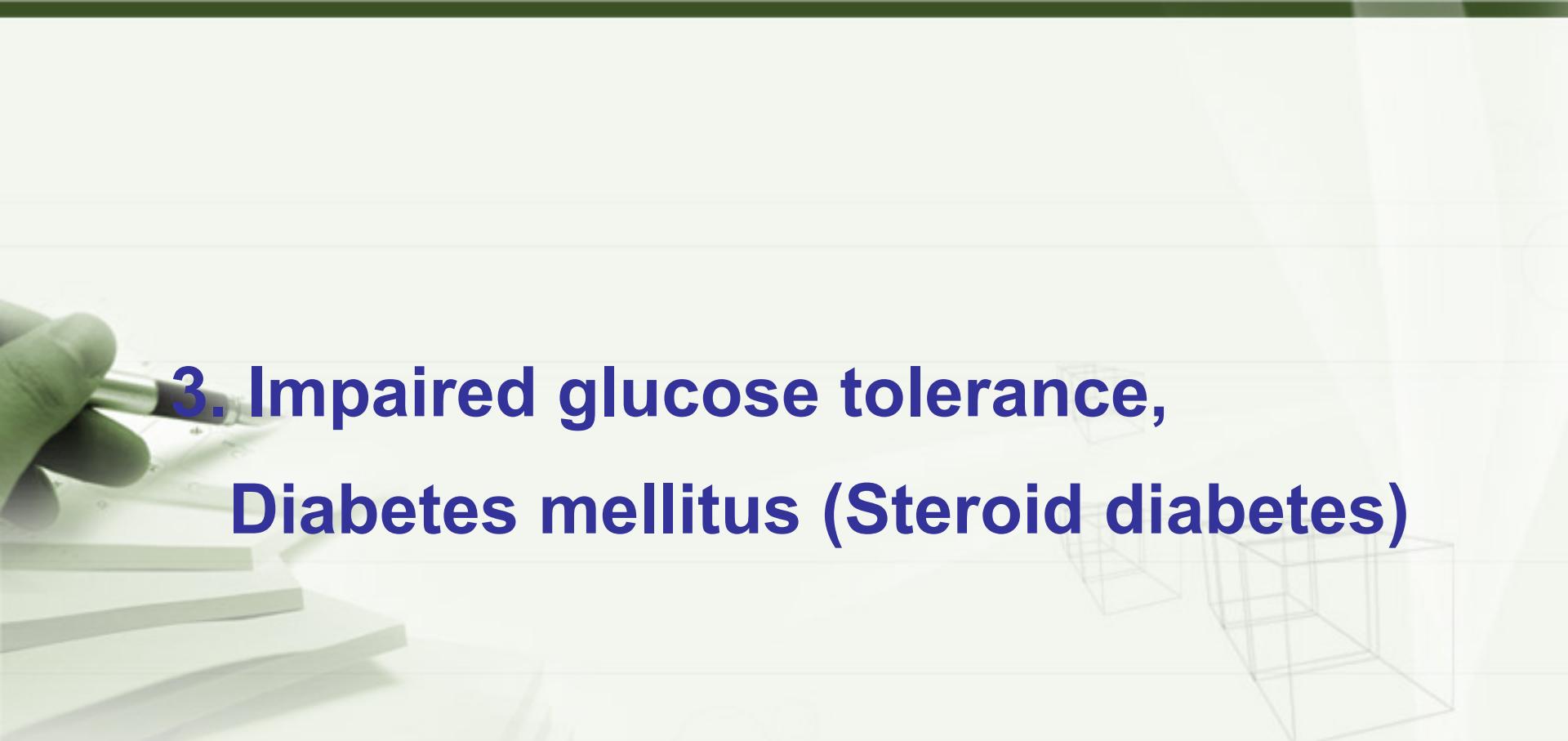
✓ **Osteoporosis:** vertebral bodies flatten



2. Hypertension, Electrolyte disturbances

Water and sodium retention, potassium depletion

- ✓ Hypertension, Hypokalemia
- ✓ left ventricular hypertrophy, heart failure, cerebrovascular accident, etc.



3. Impaired glucose tolerance, Diabetes mellitus (Steroid diabetes)

Stimulation of hepatic gluconeogenesis,
resistance of insulin

4. Infectious

Immunosuppression: functions and numbers of neutrophils, lymphocytes, monocytes, macrophages ↴
the anatomical barrier function of the skin ↴

✓ Infections of Bacteria, Fungi, Viruses

5. Sexual dysfunction

Inhibition of Gonadotropin, Adrenal androgens ↑

✓ women

- Amenorrhea or Oligomenorrhea

- Virilization: Hirsutism, Acne, Mastatropy

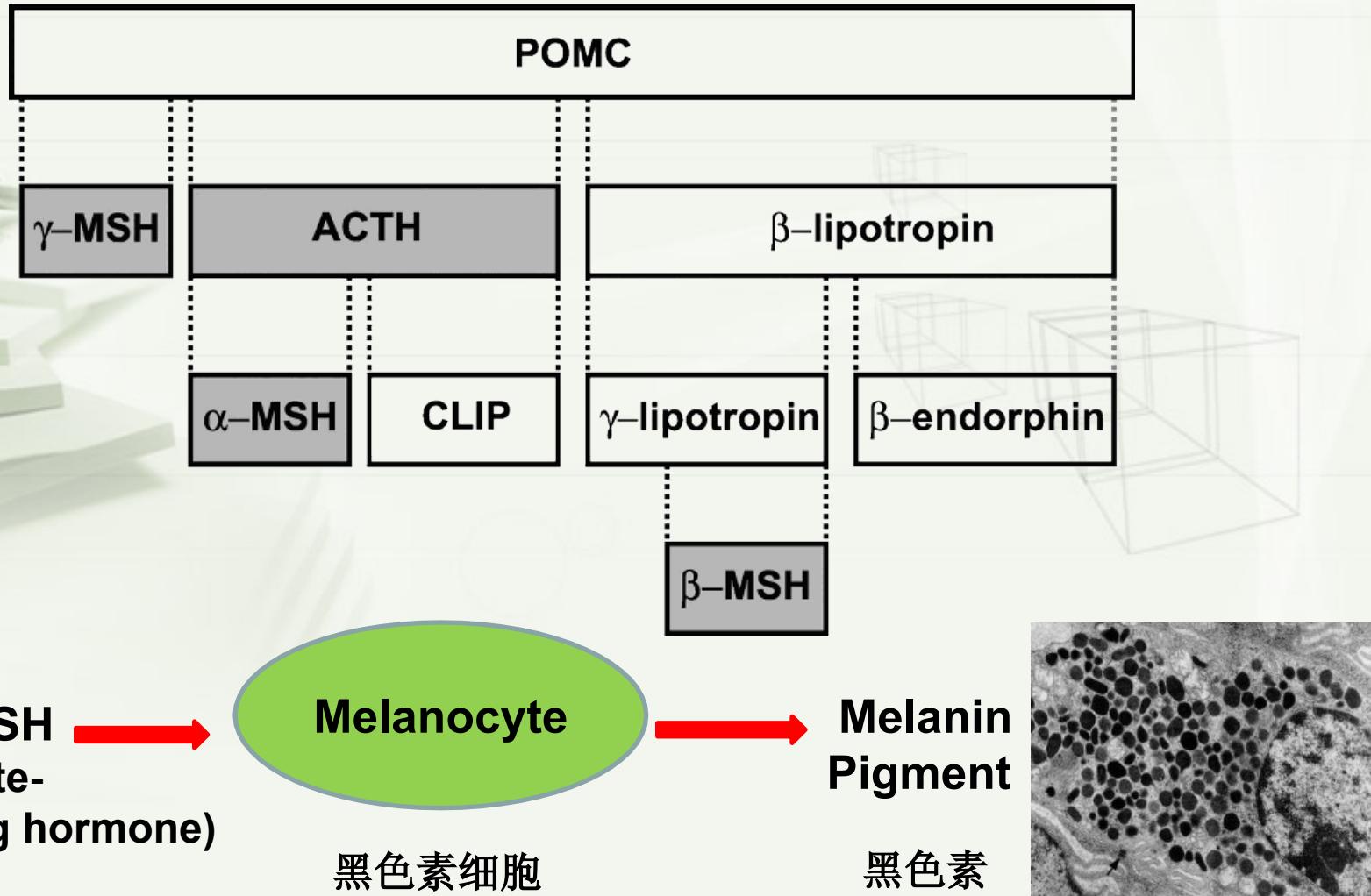
✓ men

- Decreased libido

6. Others

- **Neurologic changes:** decreased strength, headaches, decreased memory and cognition
- **Psychiatric changes:** depression, anxiety, irritability
- **Hyperpigmentation:** Ectopic ACTH syndrome and severe Cushing's disease

Mechanism of hyperpigmentation



ACTH ↑↑



The partial action of MSH



Melanin pigment deposition ↑



Hyperpigmentation

- **Hyperpigmentation:**



Tests

- 1. Plasma cortisol levels ↑**
- 2. 24-hour Urine free cortisol (UFC) ↑**

3. Plasma ACTH

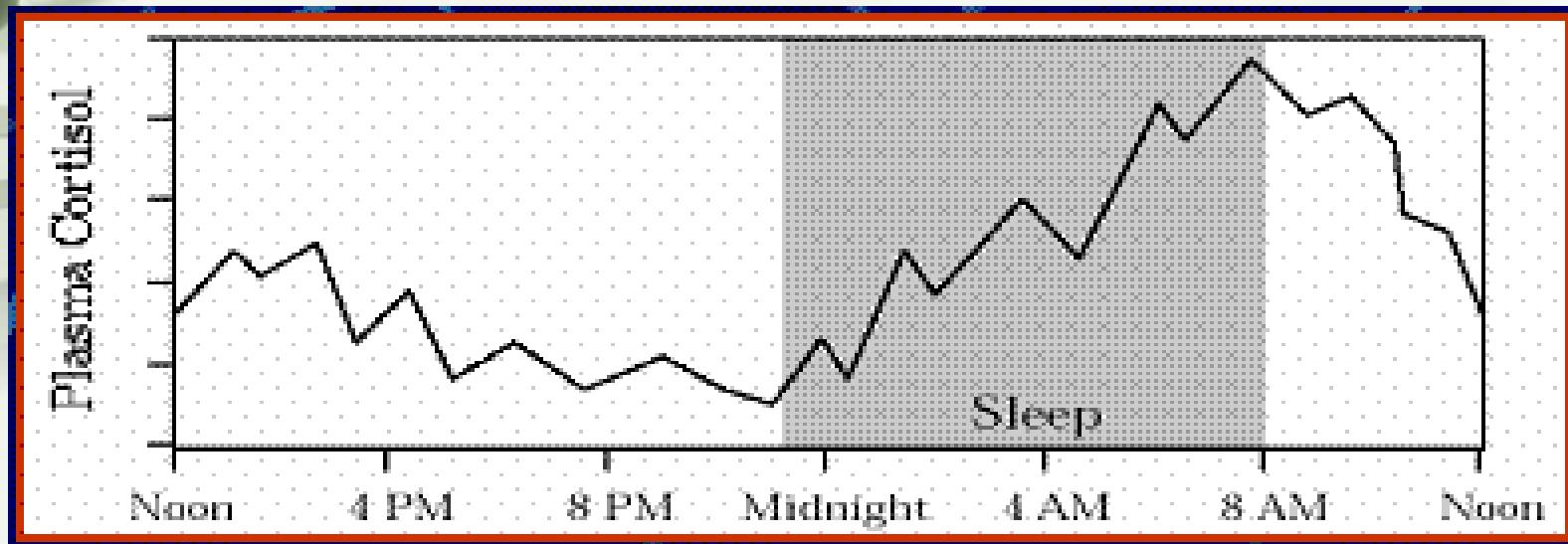
**Discrimination of ACTH-dependent and -
independent Cushing's syndrome**

Cushing's disease ↑

Adrenal adenoma ↘

Ectopic ACTH-syndrome ↑↑

4. Plasma cortisol circadian rhythm



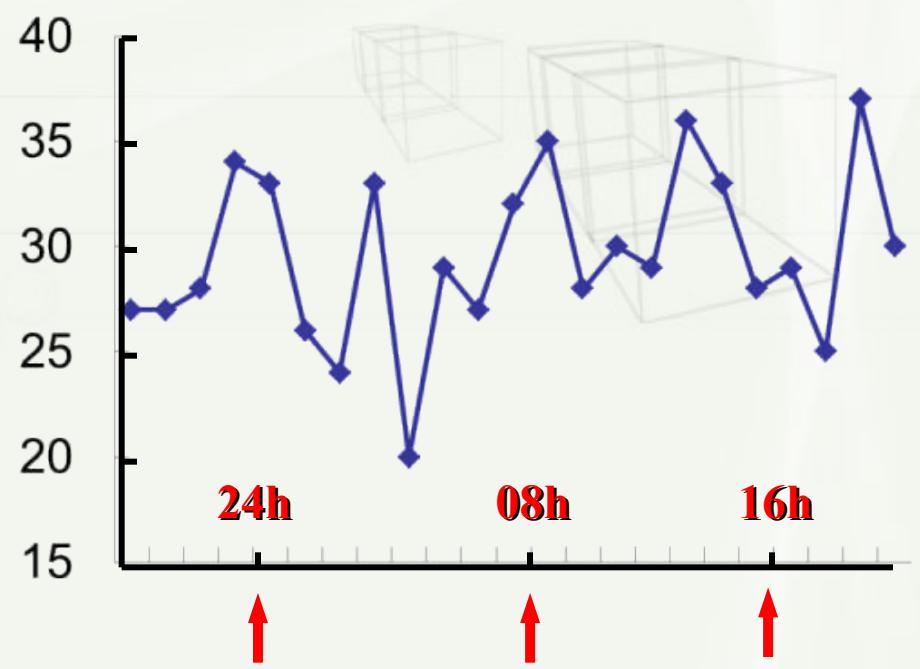
Normal cortisol circadian rhythm

Plasma cortisol circadian rhythm of cushing's syndrome

Normal



Cushing's syndrome



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