

The thymus and thyroid are relatively temporary, the former reaches its maximum size at two years and remains little changed till puberty, then rapidly atrophies. The age of function of the thyroid has been variously placed at from thirty to forty-six years of age.

Recent investigators call attention to the fact that the thymus gland is peculiar in that its structure possesses not only epithelial, but lymphoid tissue. The thyroid, adrenal and pituitary are types of epithelial gland.

Professor Rurah, of Baltimore, from a series of autopsies on infants dying of marasmus, not due to improper feeding or gastro-enteritis, found a reduction from the average weight of 12 grammes in the gland at birth to 2.2 grammes. From these studies Professor Rurah concludes that: (1) Atrophy of the thymus gland is always found in cases of infantile atrophy; (2) the condition of the thymus is an index of the general nutrition of the infant; (3) the state of nutrition in infants may be estimated by microscopical examinations of the thymus at the necropsy. The hypertrophy of the thymus, on the other hand, with prolonged persistence, is followed by sudden and unexpected death.

The pituitary, thyroid and adrenal have been grouped together by some investigators under the comprehensive term, adrenal system, because these glands have a close interdependence and an anatomical and functional relationship. Hitherto mention of disease of the pituitary body has suggested that hyper-nutrition of osseous and muscular structures associated with acromegaly. In a typical case of disease of the pituitary, the subject at death weighed 300 lbs. Heart was 2 lbs. 9 ounces, liver over 7 lbs. The inferior and superior maxillæ the clavicles and sternum were enormously enlarged. There was great kyphosis of spine and enlarged tarsus and carpus. Andriezen concluded that "the pituitary gland exercises a trophic action on the nerve tissues, which means enabling them to take up and assimilate oxygen from the blood stream, and to destroy and render innocuous the waste products of metabolism."

Tamburini, as a result of twenty-four autopsies in acromegaly, found exaggeration of the functions of the pituitary attended the first stage. "The excessive and often ravenous appetite, the thirst, polyuria, the full and hard pulse, cutaneous hyperesthesia, abnormal superficial heat, the typical muscular and osseous hyper-nutrition," all indicate excessive functional activity, the underlying factor we have seen of glycosuria. Sajous regards this organ as the governing centre of the