

Robinson Veterinary Services

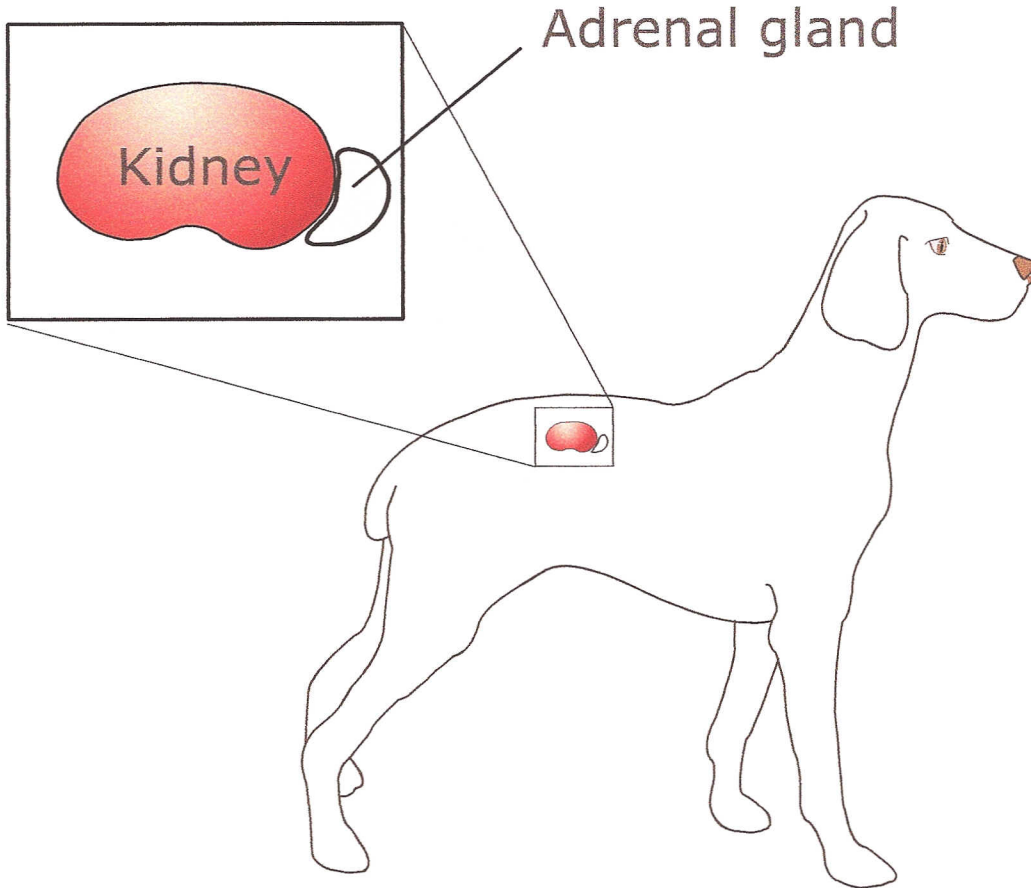
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Adrenal Gland - Dog: Location and general function of the adrenal gland.



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The adrenal glands are a pair of endocrine glands located above the kidneys. They produce hormones including cortisol, sex hormones, and aldosterone. Hormone production in the adrenal glands is normally regulated by the pituitary gland, located at the base of the brain. The adrenal glands can be affected by many conditions, including hyperadrenocorticism or Cushing's disease, hypoadrenocorticism or Addison's disease, primary adrenal tumors, and pituitary tumors. Adrenal dysfunction caused by disease within the adrenal glands is known as primary disease, while secondary adrenal disease is caused by primary disease in the pituitary gland. Both Cushing's and Addison's disease can be primary or secondary. Clinical signs associated with adrenal dysfunction are often vague and non-specific, including lethargy, weakness, and thirst. Diagnosis of adrenal disease can be difficult, and usually a battery of tests must be performed. More specific details about adrenal diseases can be found in the appropriate Client Education Handout Series.