Adrenal Adenoma

What is it?
An adrenal adenoma is a benign (non-cancerous) tumor noted in the adrenal gland.

There are two main types of benign adrenal adenomas
- Non-functional adrenal adenomas, do not cause symptoms or medical intervention.
- Functional adrenal adenomas, or hormone-secreting, may cause symptoms of hormone imbalances requiring medical intervention. These are seen in roughly 15% of cases.

How does it happen?
The cause of benign adrenal tumors is unknown.

What are risk factors to developing an adrenal adenoma?
While the exact cause is unknown, adrenal adenomas are more common in people with specific genetic syndromes: multiple endocrine neoplasia, type I and familial adenomatous polyposis. However, people with these conditions typically have multiple adenomas and other features associated with the syndrome.
What are possible symptoms?
The majority of people with adrenal adenomas will have no symptoms and the growths will only be discovered during a MRI or CT completed for other reasons. These nonfunctioning adrenal adenomas do not require follow up treatment. Functional adrenal adenomas will increase hormones made in the adrenal gland. Symptoms of this may include:

- Conn's syndrome: high blood pressure and abnormal potassium and sodium.
- Cushing's syndrome: diabetes, obesity, muscle weakness, fatigue, and high blood pressure.
- High androgens: abnormal hair growth, abnormal periods, increased muscle mass, and acne in women.
- High estrogen: breast growth and impotence in men.
- High adrenaline: high blood pressure, headaches, panic attack and heart racing.

What are possible treatments?
Most adrenal adenomas are non-functional and do not require any treatment. Functional adrenal adenomas may require medication and/or surgical intervention.

Where can I get more information?
For additional information, please seek further guidance from your primary care provider.

Sources