

Kundalini Yoga kriyas (sets/practices) work directly on the endocrine system ... more so than any other style of Yoga (IMHO). But what does the endocrine system do? It controls everything (moods, disease resistance, fat metabolism ...):

"The endocrine system consists of glands that, through the secretion of hormones, regulate just about every aspect of your body in very specific ways. Almost every cell and organ of the body is regulated by the endocrine system.

The word endocrine is derived from the Greek terms "endo" meaning within and "krine" meaning to secrete or separate. The glands in the endocrine system secrete hormones within the body.

A hormone is a chemical substance produced in the body that controls and regulates the activity of certain cells or organs. These hormones are the messengers of the endocrine system, influencing such things as metabolic activity, reproduction, mood, growth and body development. It's interesting that the word hormone is derived from the Greek "hormao" meaning "I set in motion" or "I stir up". This is exactly what hormones do.

So, a gland secretes a hormone into the blood and that hormone circulates throughout the body. When it meets up with the organ of the body it is supposed to have an effect upon that hormone goes into the cells of that organ and produces the required effect.

The way the system is built a hormone only affects the organ it is supposed to effect. This is due to the fact that each hormone molecule has a different shape. The cells that are supposed to be controlled by that hormone "recognize" that particular shape. The part of the body which is affected by a particular hormone is called the "target organ".

Some of the major glands of the endocrine system are:

- Pituitary gland
- Thymus Gland
- Hypothalamus
- Pineal Gland
- Thyroid
- Parathyroids
- Adrenal Glands
- Reproductive Glands (including ovaries and testes)

The Pituitary Gland, although no bigger than a pea, is considered the most important part of the endocrine system. It's often called the "master gland" because it makes hormones that control other endocrine glands. One of the essential hormones released by the pituitary is the Human Growth Hormone which stimulates the growth of bone and other body tissues and plays a role in the body's handling of nutrients and minerals.

The Thymus helps program our immune system to resist various infections by helping the lymphocytes (white blood cells) to mature and be programmed to attack specific micro-organisms and invading irritants. (why does Echinacea work so well? because it stimulates the Thymus gland)

The Hypothalamus is the main link between the endocrine and nervous systems. One of its functions is to control the pituitary gland.

The cone-shaped Pineal Gland secretes a hormone called melatonin which is thought to regulate sleep patterns.

Thyroid hormones control the rate at which the body burns fuel.

Among other functions, the Adrenal Glands produce a hormone called epinephrine or adrenaline which control the body's "fight or flight" mechanism by controlling blood pressure and heart rate.

The Parathyroids are attached to the thyroid. They are responsible for regulating the amount of calcium in the blood.

Reproductive Glands are the main source of sex hormones and control many of the reproductive functions of the human body.

Endocrine system or hormone problems can come about when any one of these glands produces too much or too little of its hormone. The type and extent of any hormone disorder determines the treatment."

Would YOU like to balance your endocrine system? w/o drugs? Try Kundalini Yoga -- you'll feel great in more ways than one.