Professor Sydney!

At Age 7, She Teaches Dartmouth Medical Students an Important Lesson

The pituitary gland, sometimes called the "master gland", produces eight different hormones that affect many different parts of the body. During the Endocrinology Section of the Scientific Basis of Medicine Endocrinology course, second year Dartmouth Medical School students hear multiple educational lectures, and read about each hormone in medical textbooks. The challenge is to comprehend that huge amount of information and to relate it, in practical terms, to the care of patients.

Enter Sydney – a beautiful 7-year-old girl whose pituitary gland was destroyed by a childhood tumor. During a one hour session, Sydney captivated her audience as she (and her mom) taught the second year students about the challenges of hypopituitarism. The students learned a lot about diagnosis and treatment, but more importantly they had a refreshing reminder of the human side of medicine and the tremendous satisfaction of restoring normal health and development.