

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics for corticotropin (ACTH), total cortisol, cortisol-binding globulin, free cortisol index, dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) and dehydroepiandrosterone sulphate (DHEAS) preoperatively (PreOp), on the day of surgery (DoS) and on postoperative days 1 and 2 (PoD1, PoD2). Asterisks denote Tukey's test  $p < 0.05$  compared to PreOp values – see text for details; P25/P50/P75: 1<sup>st</sup> quartile/median/3<sup>rd</sup> quartile.

		<b>Mean±SD</b>	<b>P25/P50/P75</b>
ACTH (pmol/L)	PreOp	3.60±3.43	1.42/2.40/4.31
	DoS*	23.16±40.21	1.94/4.29/25.16
	PoD1	2.63±2.59	1.29/2.13/2.62
	PoD2	1.93±1.76	0.72/1.64/2.24
Total Cortisol (nmol/L)	PreOp	410.94±132.08	302.80/405.57/454.54
	DoS*	506.43±297.92	315.90/496.62/645.61
	PoD1	452.86±344.48	264.17 /339.36/515.24
	PoD2	367.49±156.42	289.69/353.15/402.81
Cortisol Binding Globulin (nmol/L)	PreOp	717.51±296.78	536.87/730.15/896.58
	DoS*	474.24±181.69	375.81/476.74/568.01
	PoD1*	511.65±183.98	407.81/515.40/573.16
	PoD2*	1702.91±6806.14	450.97/569.09/631.36
Free Cortisol Index (unit-free)	PreOp	0.57±0.45	0.56/0.55/0.51
	DoS*	1.07±1.64	0.84/1.04/1.13
	PoD1*	0.88±1.87	0.65/0.66/0.91
	PoD2	0.73±0.42	0.64/0.62/0.64
DHEA (nmol/L)	PreOp	190.04±54.62	88.45/150.12/263.99
	DoS*	340.88±163.82	139.31/305.13/552.51
	PoD1	160.93±56.26	95.43/139.73/199.42
	PoD2	171.24±52.39	101.57/155.13/210.66
DHEAS (µmol/L)	PreOp	2.54±1.91	1.18/2.00/3.53
	DoS*	1.77±1.20	0.72/1.59/2.88
	PoD1	2.33±1.58	1.39/2.03/2.90
	PoD2	2.20±1.34	1.31/2.01/2.72