


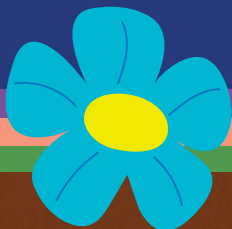
Pride and Care:

Health Tips

for Transgender,
Gender-Nonconforming
and Nonbinary People



New York City (NYC) is home to a growing transgender, gender-nonconforming and nonbinary (TGNCNB) community. TGNCNB people have specific health concerns, and it is not always easy for them to get appropriate care. This booklet provides information to support TGNCNB people's health, including gender affirmation, primary care, sexual health, self-care and community connections.



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Knowing Your Rights

In NYC, it is illegal to discriminate based on someone’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in public accommodations, including health care settings. It is also illegal to deny someone employment, housing, education, health care or other services based on their gender identity or expression.

The LGBTQ Health Care Bill of Rights informs all LGBTQ+ people of their legal rights in health care settings in NYC, empowering them to get the health care they deserve.

Health care providers and staff in any health care setting in NYC cannot legally provide a lower quality of care because of a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. To read the LGBTQ Health Care Bill of Rights, visit nyc.gov/health/lgbtq.





Gender Affirmation

Gender affirmation (the steps a TGNCNB person takes to live as their defined or affirmed gender identity rather than the gender assigned to them at birth) can take time and is different for everyone. Go at your own pace with the help of your provider. Community groups can provide emotional support and help you understand your options. If you discuss your gender affirmation with others, remember, decisions about your process are always yours to make.

Your social and romantic relationships might change during or after your gender affirmation. You may also find your emotional attractions change. Telling your partner you are TGNCNB may make you feel vulnerable, especially if you fear they will reject you or react negatively. Communicate freely with your partner. If you are in an open or polyamorous relationship, tell all your partners about your desire to affirm your gender.

In New York State, you can change your gender marker on your birth certificate or ID card to “F,” “M” or “X.” You do not need a doctor’s note, court order or medical procedure to change your gender marker. For more information, visit [nyclu.org](https://www.nyclu.org) and search for **gender marker**.





Routine Medical Care

It is important to have a provider you trust and feel comfortable with. Be open, honest and clear with your provider so you can get the right care.

Tell your provider:

- Your name and pronouns, even if they do not match your ID or health insurance
- If you take hormones or would like to start
- If you have had gender-affirming surgery or procedures
- Your sexual history, including your partners' genders, the kinds of sex you have and your typical safer sex practices



Ask your provider which routine screenings you need, such as for blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, HIV or sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Your provider may give you a chest or breast cancer screening, or a cervical or prostate exam, even if you have had surgery or hormone therapy.

You can get help finding and building a relationship with a provider through a navigator. Patient navigators can help you access primary health care and gender affirmation services. During your visit, ask about health insurance navigators who can help you apply for no- or low-cost insurance and other health services.



Nonsurgical Care

Hormones

All bodies make the hormones estrogen and testosterone. People assigned female at birth usually have more estrogen, while people assigned male at birth usually have more testosterone. Intersex people may have more estrogen or testosterone, depending on their specific intersex condition.

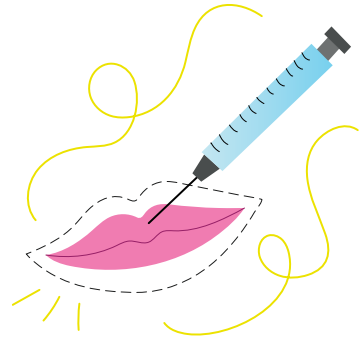
TGN CNB people may choose to take hormones (patches, injections, gels or pills) to change the levels of estrogen or testosterone in their body. Only use hormones prescribed by a health care provider. Your provider can make sure you get the right amount of hormones and monitor through blood tests.

Changes from hormones take time. Taking extra doses of hormones can be harmful and will not speed up your transition. Too much estrogen or testosterone can cause blood clots, a stroke or a heart attack. Extra testosterone converts to estrogen and may slow down your transition. Taking too much testosterone can also damage your liver.



Silicone

Some TGNCNB people use silicone injections to change the shape of their bodies. Silicone injections can cause serious scarring and even death if not done properly.



If you use silicone injections, use a clean needle every time and do not share syringes. Sharing syringes can increase your risk of exposure to hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. If you have used silicone injections in the past, tell your provider.

Chest Binders, Packers and Tucking

If you use a chest binder, do not tighten it too much. Using a chest binder with too many layers of clothing or for more than 12 hours at a time can cause pain, skin irritation and injury. Binders made specifically for chest binding are safer and more comfortable than elastic bandages or duct tape.



If you use a packer or stand-to-pee device, wash it with soap and water before and after every use. Use cornstarch instead of powders that contain talc to prevent the device from sticking to your skin or gathering dirt.

If you choose to tuck, be sure to use a safe technique. Do not use duct tape, which can cause skin irritation and damage.

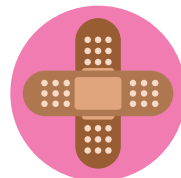
For more information on safe tucking, binding and packing, visit [folxhealth.com/library](https://www.folxhealth.com/library).



Surgical Care

TGNCNB people may choose to have surgery to affirm their gender. Common gender-affirming procedures include:

- Body contouring, including liposuction
- Facial contouring, including surgery or injectable fillers
- Chest masculinization, feminization or affirmation (top surgery) to increase or reduce breast tissue
- Masculinizing phalloplasty, metoidioplasty or scrotoplasty (bottom surgery) to construct a penis
- Vaginoplasty or labiaplasty (bottom surgery) to construct a vagina
- Orchiectomy to remove the testicles
- Tracheal cartilage shave (Adam's apple reduction)
- Hairline advancement to change the hairline through surgery or hair transplants
- Voice surgery to change the pitch of the voice



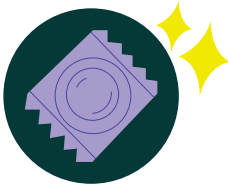
Check if your surgeon is licensed, accepts your health insurance and has experience working with TGNCNB people. Be open and realistic about your goals, and work with your surgeon to meet them. Talk with your surgeon or provider about your aftercare and any questions you have. If you have a medical emergency and are unable to reach your provider, call **911**.



Sexual Health and HIV

If you are sexually active, take these steps for a healthier sex life:

- **Be open and honest with your partners.** Ask about their sexual history and how they are feeling. Discuss your likes, dislikes and boundaries to keep sex safer and enjoyable. You should not feel pressured to do anything you are not comfortable with.
- **Get tested regularly for HIV and STIs.** It is possible to have HIV or an STI without symptoms.
- **Use condoms during anal and vaginal sex, even with partners you trust.** When used correctly, condoms are



one of the best ways to prevent HIV, STIs and pregnancy. There are many types of condoms, including internal and external condoms, and latex-free condoms for people who are allergic to latex.

- **Use water-based or silicone lubricant** to reduce the risk of tears and bleeding or the condom breaking during sex, which can increase your risk of HIV or STI exposure.
- **Use latex gloves when fingering or fisting and latex condoms or dental dams during oral sex**, as HIV and STIs can pass to the person being penetrated.
- **Talk to your provider about safe and effective ways to prevent or plan for pregnancy.** Note that testosterone does not prevent pregnancy.
- **Ask your provider which vaccines you should get.** The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine protects you from genital warts and most types of cervical, anal, vaginal, vulvar, penile and oropharyngeal cancer. There are also vaccines to protect you from hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningitis and mpox (monkeypox).

People of any gender or sexual orientation can get HIV.

To reduce your risk:

- **Take pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)** to prevent HIV. PrEP is available as a daily pill or an injection every two months.
- **Take post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)** if you do not have HIV and have been exposed (such as through sex without a condom, sexual assault or injecting drugs). You

should begin PEP within 36 hours of a possible exposure. You can call the 24/7 NYC PEP hotline at 844-3-PEPNYC (844-373-7692), or go to a clinic or an emergency room.

- **Get treatment if you have HIV.** There are many safe and effective medicines to treat HIV. The sooner you begin treatment, the less damage HIV will cause. If you are on treatment and maintain an undetectable viral load, you will not transmit HIV during sex.

For more information, visit nyc.gov/health/hiv.



More Ways to Care for Yourself

Take time to care for yourself, including your mental, physical and emotional health. Make plans and find reasons to look forward to the future.

Mental Health

- If you feel stressed or depressed, support is available.
- Be careful with drugs and alcohol, as using them increases your risk of HIV and other health issues. If you choose to use drugs or alcohol, take steps to stay safer, such as testing drugs for fentanyl or xylazine, carrying naloxone, and never using alone.

Physical Health

- There are ways to stay active, regardless of your physical ability. Try to find an activity that works for you, such as walking, running, biking or skateboarding.
- Try to get enough sleep and eat regular, healthy meals.



TGNCNB people may experience abuse from their partners. Abuse can be physical, financial, sexual or emotional, and may involve threats or insults. For help, call or text the 24/7 NYC Anti-Violence Project Hotline at 212-714-1141. In an emergency, call **911**.

Resources

There are many resources for TGNCNB people in NYC. You can find others online, or through a local community-based organization or your provider.

Health Care

Low- to no-cost care is available at City-run health care facilities, regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.

- The **NYC Sexual Health Clinics** provide prevention, testing and treatment for STIs; HIV services, including testing, PrEP, PEP and treatment initiation; and reproductive health care services. Anyone age 12 or older can receive care. No parental consent is necessary. Visit nyc.gov/health/sexualhealthclinics or call 347-396-7959.

- **NYC Health + Hospitals** offers gender affirmation care (such as hormones, surgery and voice coaching) and primary, sexual and behavioral health care. Visit nychealthandhospitals.org/services/lgbtq-health-care-services/ or call 844-692-4692.
- The **NYC Health Map** can help you find no- or low-cost health services, including LGBTQ+ care. You can search by service type and location. Visit nyc.gov/health/map.

Social Services for People With HIV

- The **HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA)** helps people with HIV apply for services, such as Medicaid, mental health and substance use services, and housing. Visit nyc.gov/hra/hasa or call 718-557-1399.

Community Support

- CK Life: Visit cklife.org or call 347-866-9002.
- Church of the Village Food Pantry: Visit churchofthevillage.org/hunger-relief or call 212-243-5470.
- Destination Tomorrow: Visit destinationtomorrow.org or call 646-723-3325.
- Translatinx Network: Visit translatinxnetwork.org or call 646-822-2000.
- The LGBT Center: Visit gaycenter.org or call 212-620-7310.
- Trevor Project: Visit thetrevorproject.org, call 866-488-7386 or text **START** to 678-678.

Housing

- Ali Forney Center: Visit aliforneycenter.org or call 212-222-3427.



- Housing Works: Visit housingworks.org or call 718-277-0386.
- The Door: Visit door.org or call 212-941-9090 (extension 3249).
- True Colors United: Visit truecolorsunited.org or call 212-461-4401.

Legal

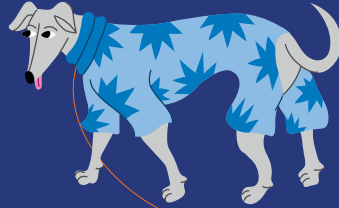
- Immigration Equality: Visit immigrationequality.org, or call 212-714-2904 or, if in detention, 917-654-9696.
- Lambda Legal: Visit lambdalegal.org or call 212-809-8585.
- NYC Commission on Human Rights: Visit nyc.gov/humanrights or call 212-416-0197.
- New York Legal Assistance Group: Visit nylag.org or call 212-613-5000.
- Queer Detainee Empowerment Project: Visit qdep.org or call 347-645-9339.

Mental Health and Crisis Support

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or text **988** or chat at 988lifeline.org.
- Project Return Peer Support Network: Call 888-448-9777.
- Trans Lifeline: Visit translifeline.org or call 877-565-8860.

This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive. The NYC Health Department is providing this information to assist New Yorkers in locating services and general information but does not make any representation or warranty concerning the quality or accuracy of the services provided by these identified establishments.

This booklet was produced in collaboration with the NYC Unity Project and the NYC Health Department's Transgender, Gender-Nonconforming and Nonbinary Community Advisory Board. Illustrations by Steph Medeiros.



Learn more at
nyc.gov/health/lgbtq.



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