TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NONCONFORMING HEALTH AND WELLNESS

This document uses traditional medical terminology to refer to body parts in order to be as specific as possible. We recognize that you may not use these terms to refer to your body, and that you may be uncomfortable with the use of these terms. We acknowledge the language limitations, so we hope that you will individualize the information presented here into your own terms and for your own body.

As a transgender or gender nonconforming student, you deal with all of the usual challenges of relationships, safer sex, school and work. However, you may also be faced with discrimination, effects of hormones, and passing.

At the Student Health Center (SHC), we understand that seeking healthcare services may be an uncomfortable experience. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with respect, and we strive to make our services more accessible to transgender and gender nonconforming students. Most SHC staff members are Safe Zone trained.

You have the right to ask questions, advocate for yourself, set limits, bring someone with you, and/or refuse particular treatments. In turn, it is important to be open and honest with your healthcare provider about your body, your behavior, and your concerns.

HORMONES

Some transgender people use hormones during an anatomical and/or psychological transition. It is important to be monitored by a healthcare professional to ensure the hormones you are taking are safe for you. Hormones need time to work, and should be taken exactly as prescribed for you — taking more does not achieve results faster and it’s dangerous.

STARTING HORMONE THERAPY AT NYU

Considering hormone therapy? First make an appointment with someone from the Gender and Sexuality Team in Counseling and Wellness Services. Over the course of a few sessions, you will talk it over and decide whether hormone therapy is the right option for you at this time. If so, your counselor will provide a “hormone letter” to initiate hormone treatment in consultation with a medical provider either at the SHC or with an outside endocrinologist.

Once you start hormones you will follow up with your healthcare provider every 3 months for the first year. After that, you’ll check in less frequently. SHC Primary Care has several providers at both the Washington Square and Brooklyn SHC locations who initiate and manage hormone therapy for both FTM and MTF students. SHC Women’s Health providers offer hormone therapy management after the initial consultation and start of treatment.

Buying hormones that have not been prescribed for you can be harmful. Many, but not all, hormone therapies are injectable. Always use a sterile needle when injecting hormones. Sterile needles can be obtained from pharmacies with a prescription. Physical changes with hormone therapy might take several years to be fully realized, and many of these changes are not reversible.

Please note: although there are counselors at the majority of the global sites, it may not be possible to start hormone therapy at all NYU global sites or to continue hormone treatment when studying away. Call the Wellness Exchange (24/7) hotline at 212-443-9999 for more information.
MEDICAL SERVICES
Services that are typically gendered can be provided in alternate departments if you prefer. For example, many of the Primary Care providers are able to perform pelvic health exams typically thought of as “women’s health” or a student may arrange with a Women’s Health provider to have this exam performed in a more neutral setting such as Primary Care. If you need this type of exam please speak with your current Primary Care provider or call the Women’s Health nurse at 212-443-1169 and request a “gyn exam in a neutral setting.”

IF YOU HAVE IT, CHECK IT
- Pelvic exams and Pap tests are recommended every three years for people with a vagina, uterus, cervix and/or ovaries who are over the age of 21.
- The current guideline recommends Mammograms every 2 years for women between the ages of 50 and 75. However, people over 40 who are taking hormones should discuss the need for and frequency of screening with their medical provider.
- Testicular self-exams should be performed once a month. Most cases of testicular cancer occur in those between the ages of 18 and 30.

Talk with your healthcare provider about which of these exams is appropriate for you regardless of gender identity or expression.

BINDING
Because binding involves the tight compression of the breasts around the mid-section, the most common risks associated with binding involve breathing problems and back pain. It is important to give yourself a break from binding in order to let your skin breathe, prevent skin irritation, and to relieve any aches and pains the binder may cause. If you have questions about the fit of your binder, please ask your provider.

VOICE MODIFICATION
The NYU Speech-Language-Hearing clinic is committed to supporting people in the transgender community to achieve their authentic voices. You may consider joining a free group hosted by this center called Voice & Communication Group for People in the Transgender Community. The goal of the meetings is to assist with a progression toward each individual’s self-selected communication changes. Meetings include warm up and breathing exercises, Q&A on vocal health, voice and communication, individual and group voice exercises with particular attention to carry-over for everyday life and planning for the future. To learn about the group, contact Darlene Monda at dmm302@nyu.edu or 212-992-7691. Individual voice modification services may also be available through this clinic. Contact Jacqueline Mezzacappa at 212-998-5261.

INSURANCE COVERAGE
The NYU-sponsored student health insurance plan provides coverage for trans-related hormone therapy as well as sexual realignment surgery (SRS) — also known as gender affirming surgery or sexual reassignment surgery. For specific benefit information, including levels of in-network and out-of-network coverage, refer to the Student Health Insurance guide at: www.nyu.edu/health/insurance

We cannot predict all of your health needs, but we are working to make all services more accessible to everyone at NYU. If you come across a situation in which you need more help, please contact the SHC Patient Advocate, 212-443-1000 or the Director at the LGBTQ Student Center, 212-998-4424, lgbtq.student.center@nyu.edu.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND VIOLENCE
Sexual violence can affect anyone, regardless of sex, gender, and sexual orientation. Sexual violence can happen with someone you have just met, with an intimate partner, or with a stranger in a bias attack. Sometimes a sexual encounter may leave a person feeling confused, angry, or violated, even if they have not defined their experience as sexual assault or sexual harassment. Your behavior or decisions do not cause sexual violence. No one asks to be sexually assaulted or sexually harassed. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, violence or harassment, contact the Wellness Exchange (24/7) at 212-443-9999 to get confidential support and access to resources.