

EXPECT MORE

Everyone Deserves Good Health

7th Annual National LGBT Health Awareness Week

TRANSWOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

If you are transgender or think you might be, you can live a healthy life. There are certain things you should know:

HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY - Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) involves taking estrogen and sometimes an anti-androgen to promote breast development, soften skin, lighten body and facial hair, decrease fat in the belly and increase fat in the hips and thighs. HRT is not risk-free, and estrogen should not be taken without medical supervision and regular blood tests

SEX REASSIGNMENT SURGERY - Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) usually follows the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). Although these standards are imperfect, they still offer the best protection for patients and surgeons. Regular visits are necessary to make sure of proper healing after surgery. Even after SRS, an annual prostate exam after is still needed after age 50, or age 40 if African-American. Taking estrogen usually reduces prostate problems, but there is a slight chance it may cause prostate enlargement.

SEXUAL HEALTH - Safe sex methods must be appropriate to the practices of transwomen, this can include the use of condoms, dental dams and/or other latex barriers with sex partners. All sexually active people should be tested for STDs every six months. After breast growth occurs, transwomen should do a monthly breast self-examination (BSE). In addition, an annual breast exam and an annual mammogram are necessary after five years of taking estrogen.

SMOKING - Smoking increases the risk of blood clots while taking estrogen. Blood clots can stop the blood flow within legs, lungs, brain (stroke) or heart (heart attack), all of which can cause permanent damage, including paralysis and even death.

MENTAL HEALTH - Living in a transphobic society can cause a great deal of stress, anxiety and depression, mental health providers must be trained to be culturally competent. Make sure to get the support you need!

For more information, please see:

Gender Education and Advocacy (GEA) (www.gender.org)
International Foundation for Gender Education (www.ifge.org)
National Center for Transgender Equality (www.ncte.org)
Trans Health Conference (trans-health.org)