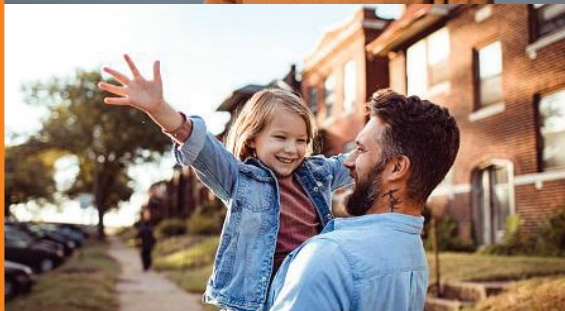




Care. Above All Else.

LGBTQIA+ Health





People of any sexual orientation or gender identity can face health problems. LGBTQIA+ people may be at a greater risk for these. This is because they may not always see a healthcare provider when they need to, or they may not know any providers who understand the LGBTQIA+ community. It may be that they feel embarrassed, have had a bad experience, and fear judgment, or they may have a provider who is uninformed. In addition, state laws vary on care that a LGBTQIA+ person may receive.

Here are some health issues to be aware of and talk about with your provider.

Transitioning

While transitioning, you'll take hormones to achieve masculine or feminine effects. Those hormones carry risks:

- Low or high blood pressure
- Blood clots
- Increasing cholesterol or triglyceride levels
- Stroke
- Thicker blood (increased hemoglobin)
- Heart disease
- Certain cancers
- Fluid loss (dehydration) and electrolyte imbalance
- Liver damage

Sometimes a transgender person buys hormones from a nonmedical provider. This may be because the therapy isn't covered by insurance, or it could be because the person doesn't want to get medical care. This can result in taking the wrong hormone or the wrong dosage, and this may increase the chance for serious harmful effects. To limit the risks, a healthcare provider should closely keep track of hormone therapy with blood levels and physical exams.

Cancer

Trans people are at a slightly higher risk of developing some cancers that are tied to hormone use. The breasts, uterus, ovaries, prostate, lung, colon, or liver can be affected. This depends on the stage of transition.

Your routine healthcare should include screenings such as prostate, breast, and pelvic exams. You might face challenges dealing with healthcare issues. However, don't put off these exams. Not getting preventive screening could result in a delay in the diagnosis and treatment of any cancer.

Mental health issues

LGBTQIA+ people often have mental health issues as they struggle to identify with their sexuality. You may have a hard time sharing such personal information with family and friends. You may worry about how loved ones will react. Or you may feel lonely because you don't want to tell anyone, even those close to you. You may feel depressed or anxious because of this lack of support or acceptance from your friends, family, or community. In addition, LGBTQIA+ people may face discrimination, social stigma, harassment, and violence not seen by people who identify as heterosexual. But if you don't get attention and treatment, your risk for suicide or having a serious mental health problem may increase.



What is HIV?

- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).
- There is currently no effective cure. Once people get HIV, they have it for life.
- But with proper medical care, HIV can be controlled. People with HIV who get effective HIV treatment can live long, healthy lives and protect their partners.

What is PrEP?

- Pre-exposure Prophylaxis is medicine taken to prevent getting HIV.
- It is highly effective for prevention of HIV when it is taken as recommended/prescribed.
- PrEP can reduce the risk of contracting HIV from sex, around 99%.
- It also can reduce the risk of contracting HIV from injection drug use by upwards of 74%.
- Please note that it is less effective if it is not taken as prescribed.
- If it is not taken as prescribed, condom use is recommended to help prevent HIV.

Source: CDC. Reference to specific commercial products, manufacturers, companies, or trademarks does not constitute its endorsement or recommendation by the U.S. Government, Department of Health and Human Services, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

More information is found on the CDC website:

cdc.gov/hiv/prevention/prep.html



Resources

Statewide

- **Transgender suicide hotline:** 877-565-8860
- **Trevor Project Helpline:** 866-488-7386
- **2-1-1 Hotline:** Resources Helpline
- **9-8-8 Hotline:** Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- **Planned parenthood of Michigan:**
1-800-230-7526
- **Equality Michigan:** 313-537-7000
- **Transgender Michigan:**
transgendermichigan.org
- **Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program:**
ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/

Local

- **Benton Harbor**
OutCenter - 269-934-5633
- **Wayne/Oakland**
Ruth Ellis Center - ruthelliscenter.org
Affirmations (Ferndale) - 248-398-7105
LGBT Detroit - lgbtdetroit.org
MiGen (45+) - migenconnect.org
- **Kalamazoo**
OutFront Legacy House: 269-349-4234
- **Jackson**
Jackson Pride Center: 734-627-7570
- **Grand Rapids**
Grand Rapids Pride Center - 616-458-3511
Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center -
616-331-2530