

# Northern Region Transgender Health Services

---

## Consent form for starting masculinising hormone therapy

*This consent form outlines important information you might want to talk to your health team about before starting hormones to masculinise the body.*

There are different types of testosterone that are taken to masculinise the body. Everyone is different in how quickly they respond to testosterone but you will start to notice changes in your body gradually over the first few months. It may take several years before the full effect is felt. While there are different ways of getting testosterone into the body most people are on injections.

Permanent body changes (*even if you stop taking testosterone*):

- Deeper voice
- Increased growth of hair – with thicker hairs on arms, legs, chest, back and abdomen
- Gradual growth of moustache/beard hair
- Hair loss at the temples – possibly becoming bald with time
- Genital changes – clitoral growth (typically 1-3 cm) and vaginal dryness

Non-permanent body changes (*that may reverse if you stop the testosterone*):

- Skin changes – increased oil and acne
- Change in body shape – less fat on buttocks, hips and thighs
- Increased muscle mass and upper body strength
- Increased sex drive
- Periods usually stop after 1-6 months

Things that don't change much:

- Breast tissue looks a bit smaller due to fat loss
- Possible weight gain or loss

### Fertility

While it is not known what the long term effects are of taking testosterone some transmen find that if they stop their testosterone their periods will come back and that they can get pregnant. There are no guarantees for anyone and it is probably harder to get pregnant the older you are and the longer you have been on testosterone.

Testosterone is dangerous for the developing fetus – **you must not get pregnant while you are on testosterone.** Even after your periods stop you might still be at risk of getting pregnant. If you are having any sexual contact that puts you at risk of pregnancy you must talk to your health team about contraception options.

### Sex

Taking testosterone causes your vagina to become dryer and more fragile. This increases the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV if you are having any sexual contact with this part of the body. Condoms provide good protection against STIs.

### Mental health

Some people find that testosterone can cause emotional changes such as increased irritation, frustration and anger. Some people find their mental health improves – the effects of hormones on the brain are not fully understood. Transitioning can be a stressful time and many people need some help adjusting to the physical and emotional changes. It is really important that you let your health team know if you are having problems so that they can help you access the support you need.

# Northern Region Transgender Health Services

## Potential risks of testosterone

The full medical effects and safety of taking hormones are not fully known. The potential risks of taking testosterone must be weighed against the benefits that hormones can have on your health and quality of life.

Likely increased risk

- Increased red blood cells (polycythemia) - might thicken the blood and increase the risk of a stroke or heart attack
- Sleep apnoea

Possible increased risk

- Changes to cholesterol (may increase risk for heart disease)
- Liver problems

Possible increased risk if you have additional risk factors

- Diabetes
- Increased blood pressure

No increased risk or unknown

- Breast cancer
- Cervical, ovarian, uterine cancer
- Blood clots – deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

The risk of health problems is higher if you are a smoker or overweight.

Keeping in touch with your health team for regular checkups and blood tests is an important part of your care and will reduce the risks of taking hormonal therapy.

Are there any other questions you want to ask?

It is your health team's responsibility to best support you to make the decisions that are right for you and to keep ourselves up to date so that we can best inform you.

If you are having any doubts, or decide to change your mind about taking hormones – that's okay. A very small number of people will regret their decision to take hormone therapy and may need to live with the body changes that have occurred. Come and talk – your health team is always ready to listen.

**I wish to start masculinising hormone therapy:**

Name

Date

**Prescribed by:**

Name

Date