

# Gender-Affirming Care at VA: Resources for Veterans

VA provides a wide range of treatments to all eligible Veterans. Gender-affirming care plans are personalized based on your goals and your health. Talk to your care providers to see what services are right for you. LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinators are also available to help connect you to services and resources.



## Gender-Affirming Hormones

VA covers gender-affirming hormones which help bodies and appearances better match with gender identity. All medications have both risks and benefits which will be discussed with you prior to starting any treatment. The process for starting treatment can vary.



## Pre-treatment Assessments for Gender-Affirming Hormones

Prescriptions are linked to a diagnosis the medication is treating. Providers will talk to you about your gender identity and your goals for treatment and consider if a diagnosis is appropriate. Blood work and other health screenings may be needed before hormones are prescribed.



## Gender-Affirming Prosthetics

Several items are available through the VA when medically needed. These can include, but are not limited to, breast forms, chest binders, dilator sets for post-vaginoplasty, gaffs, packers, surgical compression vests, and wigs. Talk to your treatment team about what is right for you.



## Fertility Preservation/Family Planning/ Lactation Support

VA has services to help Veterans store eggs and sperm, as well as build and support families. These services are coordinated through VA Women's Health Program for all Veterans. Talk to your provider about your options.



## Voice and Communication Training

Speech language pathologists with skills in gender-affirming treatments can help you match your voice and communication style with your identity. This care is sometimes delivered through telehealth to your home.



## Medically-Necessary Hair Removal

Hair removal often happens through referrals to community-based centers. While availability varies, VA is working to improve access for all eligible Veterans.



## Letters of Support for Gender-Affirming Surgery (outside of VA)

Some Veterans use their private health insurance or pay out-of-pocket for surgical treatments. Most surgeons and private health insurance companies require letters from providers. VA providers can coordinate care with your surgeon.

While VA cannot yet provide initial gender-affirming surgical procedures, VA does provide surgical care for the following:

- Some complications of surgeries, including revision surgeries for unexpected problems
- Removing testicles or ovaries for hormone management if prescription hormones aren't an option for you
- Needed surgeries for other medical reasons (e.g., cancer, back pain) that may also be consistent with your transition goals

If you want an expert interdisciplinary team to review your treatment plan and provide a second opinion/consultation on your care, **ask your doctor to place a National Transgender & Gender Diverse E-consultation request.** With your consent, a VA provider (nurse, doctor, social worker, psychologist, etc.) can get advice about your treatment plan through your electronic medical record. The expert team will review your medical record and answer your provider's questions.

## Questions?

Visit the VHA LGBTQ+ Health Program webpage at: [www.patientcare.va.gov/lgbt/](http://www.patientcare.va.gov/lgbt/)

