

# Your Journey through Gender-Affirming Care



For more information scan this QR code or go to [myhealth.alberta.ca/gender-affirming-care-pathway](https://myhealth.alberta.ca/gender-affirming-care-pathway)

The information in this guide applies to those over 18 years of age. Gender-affirming care includes a variety of non-medical and medical options designed to support and honour your gender identity. Your healthcare team can help you create a care plan tailored to your needs to support you on your gender-affirming care journey. It will help you to know what to expect as you work with your care team on your gender-affirmation goals. You are the most important part of your healthcare team. If you have any questions along the way, please ask your team.

## Before your appointment

- Write down how you feel, how your experience with gender has been for you, and any questions or concerns.
- Consider bringing a family member or friend to support you.



## Visit your healthcare provider

- In order to better support your gender-affirmation, your healthcare provider needs to hear from you and understand who you are and what matters to you.
- Your health includes physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, and social elements. The more you can share your needs, goals, and concerns, the better your healthcare provider can support you.



## Get your tests

- Some medical treatments rely on balancing hormone levels and supporting your body to respond well to treatment. Some treatments require monitoring bloodwork and making medication changes based on these results.
- In most cases, you will not need a physical exam except in cases where it is absolutely necessary for either a particular treatment or surgical referral.



## Review your test results

- Find your test results on MyHealth Records or MyAHS Connect ([myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords](https://myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords)), or ask your healthcare provider to print them for you.
- Talk with your healthcare provider so you know what your test results mean.



## Review your treatment & management options

- Your healthcare provider will help you better understand your options and give you important strategies to guide your journey of gender-affirmation.
- Non-medical options are an important part of your journey. These include community resources, support with name & documentation changes, options for gender-affirming gear and counselling.
- Medication (hormone therapy) may be used to increase certain hormone levels and reduce others that lead to changes in gender characteristics.
- Gender-affirming surgeries may also be options to pursue.
- Discuss with your healthcare provider what to expect from treatment and how each may impact you.



## Start your treatment & watch your symptoms

- Take an active role in your treatment; write down any new symptoms.
- Changes in hormone levels can have side effects. To help manage these, check with your healthcare provider on what changes are to be expected and what potential symptoms would need medical attention.



## Talk with your healthcare provider about a referral

- You may need a referral to different healthcare providers based on your specific needs, especially if gender-affirming surgeries are being pursued.
- Ask who you are being sent to and what they do.
- Ask how long it will take to be seen and what you should do if you don't hear back.



## Keep taking care of yourself

- Keep taking care of your overall health, including health screening and looking at healthy lifestyle supports.



Whole-person health

### Important Tips:

#### Need a family doctor?

[ahs.ca/findadoctor](https://ahs.ca/findadoctor)

#### Need a translator or interpreter?

Let your healthcare provider know

#### Need health advice?

Call Health Link at 811

#### Need to find programs and resources in your community?

Call 211 or visit [ab.211.ca](https://ab.211.ca)