

SAFE & AFFIRMING BINDING PRACTICES

A guide to gender-affirming care that supports your health and well-being



SAFER BINDING TIPS



USE SAFE MATERIALS

If a commercial binder isn't accessible, a sports compression shirt or snug sports bra may be used. These are safer than makeshift options like ACE bandages, duct tape, or plastic wrap—which are dangerous and can cause injury.



TAKE BREAKS & CHECK THE FIT

Try to schedule binder-free days when possible. Give your body time to stretch and breathe. Whatever method you use, ensure it's snug but not painful. If you feel dizzy, short of breath, or sore—remove it and rest.



LIMIT BINDING TIME

Bind for no more than 8 hours a day and always remove the binder for sleeping, exercise, or rest when you can. Overbinding can cause shortness of breath, rib pain, and skin damage.



DIY SAFER TIPS

Some DIYers use double-layer sports bras, compression undershirts, or stretchy shapewear, layered carefully. Avoid materials that are stiff, non-breathable, or wrap tightly around the chest. Ask a support organization or community member for input if unsure.

BINDING (CHEST COMPRESSION)

can be a deeply affirming experience for many trans, nonbinary, and gender-diverse people. Whether it's about safety, comfort, or gender euphoria—your identity is valid, and you deserve care that affirms you.



Your body deserves care—no matter what you wear or how you identify.

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LOCAL & FREE BINDER SUPPORT

- **Out on the Shelf** – Binder donations, peer support, Marley Yott Legacy Project Fund, and info – www.outontheshelf.com, info@outontheshelf.com
- **Trans Lifeline Canada** – 1-877-330-6366
- **Rainbow Health Ontario** – Trans health guides: www.rainbowhealthontario.ca
- **Bindsafe** – <https://www.thegetrealmovement.com/bindsafe>
- **trans care+** – <https://transcareplus.org/>
- Local youth groups or queer resource centers may offer gently used binders or donation programs.

BINDING CAN BE LIFE- AFFIRMING

Studies show that binding significantly supports gender affirmation and improves mental health for many people. That said, binding safely is critical for long-term well-being. **Your safety and identity are not mutually exclusive. You deserve access to both.**

REFERENCES

- Peitzmeier, S. M., et al. (2017). Health impact of chest binding among transgender adults. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 19(1), 64–75.
- Cohen, E., et al. (2020). Chest binding and care seeking among transmasculine adults. *Transgender Health*, 5(3), 167–175.
- Bauer, G. R., et al. (2015). Transgender people's health in Canada: Trans PULSE Project.