

WHAT IS HRT?

9 Quick Facts



1. WHAT IS HRT?

- Hormone Replacement Therapy, or HRT for short, means taking hormones (like estrogen, testosterone, or progesterone) to support your health and well-being.
- For trans and non-binary people, HRT can be gender-affirming—helping your body better align with your identity.
- For other medical uses, HRT can treat menopause symptoms, hormonal imbalances, or certain conditions like cancer.

2. WHAT CAN HRT DO?

- Support physical changes (like voice, body hair, fat distribution, skin texture).
- Improve mental health and well-being by reducing gender dysphoria.
- In other contexts: ease menopause symptoms, support bone health, or manage cancer treatment.

3. WHO CAN PRESCRIBE HRT

- Family doctors, nurse practitioners, endocrinologists, gynecologists, and oncologist can prescribe HRT.

4. THE INFORMED CONSENT MODEL (ONTARIO)

- In Ontario, you **don't** need a psychiatrist's letter to access gender-affirming HRT.
- Care is usually based on informed consent: your provider explains the risks, benefits, and options, and you make the choice.

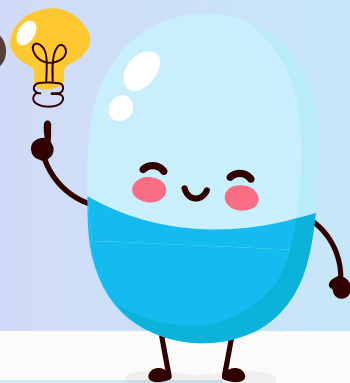
5. ACCESSING GENDER-AFFIRMING HRT IN ONTARIO

- Can access via Primary Care
- Self referrals at specialized clinics such as HIVE or Gender Affirm
- Health Service Providers who need guidance on providing HRT can use Rainbow Health Ontario's Gender-Affirming Care guidelines
- You will need to discuss health history, goals, risks, options, reversible vs. long-term changes
- There will be regular check-ups, blood tests, and dose adjustments
- Some surgeries require 12 months HRT
- Gender/designation changes are allowed without surgery.



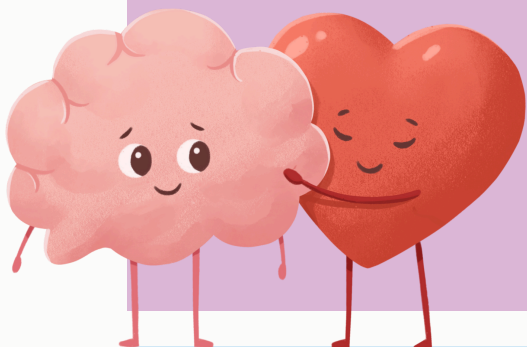
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6. SOME BENEFITS OF HRT IN GENDER AFFIRMING CARE

- Reduces Gender Dysphoria
- Creates Physical Alignment
- Gives Social Affirmation
- Improvements in Quality of Life



7. HOW OLD DO YOU HAVE TO BE FOR HRT?

- Under **Ontario's Health Care Consent Act**, anyone of any age can consent to medical treatment (including HRT) if a healthcare provider determines they understand the treatment, its risks, benefits, and alternatives.
- Trans and gender-diverse youth can start HRT if they are assessed as capable of informed consent. Often, this involves consultation with doctors, endocrinologists, or clinics specializing in gender-affirming care.

8. REMEMBER!

- **Effects take time**—some changes are gradual (months to years).
- **Monitoring is important:** regular bloodwork helps track hormone levels and overall health.
- **Access matters:** some people face barriers in rural areas or with providers who aren't trained in gender-affirming care.
- Not Everyone Chooses HRT: **It's valid to affirm identity in many ways**—through social, expressive, legal, or medical paths. HRT is one option among many.
- **Every person's journey is different.** What matters most are your goals, your identity, and your comfort.
- Having access to HRT doesn't mean pressure to conform—**it means having choice.**
- **Love, care, dignity, and respect matter** in medical settings as much as the medical facts.
- Being informed helps you **advocate** for yourself (or help others) in health conversations.

9. WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT

Hive Health Services

guelphchc.ca/hivehealthservices

Gender Affirm Guelph

genderaffirmguelph.ca

Queer Health Hub

guelphqueerhealthhub.ca

Rainbow Health Ontario

rainbowhealthontario.ca

Out on the Shelf

(Peer Support & Information)

www.outontheshelf.com



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