



# Transfeminine Services

The **Center for Gender Surgery** at Boston Children's Hospital provides gender affirmation surgery services to eligible adolescents and young adults, usually after they have completed other steps in the gender affirmation process, such as taking supplemental hormones. To be eligible for these procedures, you must meet certain criteria.

## We offer the following procedures to patients who identify as transfeminine:

### Breast augmentation surgery

A type of "top surgery" in which physicians use implants to increase breast size. During this procedure, your physician will make an incision under each breast or around the areola. They will then insert implants (usually saline-filled implants) sub-muscularly, or behind your pectoral muscles.

People who choose to undergo breast augmentation surgery usually do so after taking supplemental estrogen for at least a year. This allows time for as much breast growth as possible through hormone treatment. Many women are happy with the amount of breast growth they achieve through hormones alone and don't need additional surgery.

#### After care

You should be able to return to school or work about a week after surgery. Because the healing process can take time, you shouldn't engage in strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting in the first three weeks after breast augmentation surgery.

You will need to follow up with your care team within three to seven days of the procedure. Your clinician will explain in detail how to care for your incisions and how to look for signs of infection.

### Vaginoplasty

A type of "bottom surgery" (surgery on the genitals). It involves the surgical creation of a vagina and vulva (clitoris, labia minora, and labia majora) from your existing genital tissue, including the penis and scrotum.

Orchiectomy (surgical removal of the testicles) is often performed at the same time as vaginoplasty but can also be performed at an earlier time in transition.

#### After care

Vaginoplasty requires a significant recovery time and ongoing self-care. You should expect to spend about a week in the hospital following your surgery and to return for follow-up appointments after you are discharged. Because the healing process can take time, you shouldn't engage in strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting in the first six weeks after vaginoplasty.

You will need to urinate through a catheter for one to two weeks after surgery. Your clinical team will give you detailed instructions on how to care for the catheter and how to check for signs of infection at the surgical site, such as redness and swelling.

**"We are the first gender surgery center housed in a pediatric hospital"**

You will likely be able to walk around and engage in light activity within a week after surgery, and healed enough to go back to all activities at around six weeks.

This surgery has a very long healing process that can take 12 to 18 months.

Unlike other gender affirmation surgeries, vaginoplasty requires a lifetime commitment to after care. If you have a vaginoplasty, you will initially have to dilate your vagina multiple times a day to keep it open. Eventually, that can be reduced to several times a week, depending on a variety of factors. Your care team will explain in detail how to do this.

### Hair removal

Patients who plan to have a vaginoplasty first need to undergo hair removal on and around the genitals. You can find a list of trans-affirming hair removal providers in your area at [transcaresite.org](http://transcaresite.org).

### Voice therapy

You may want to modify the way you speak to better align with your gender. A voice and communication therapist can work with you to assess and alter the tone, resonance, and pitch of your voice without straining or otherwise hurting it. You will also learn ways to "feminize" your language and communication.

### Facial feminization

Facial feminization is offered to transgender women to address facial features that are masculine. It can include reduction of prominent brow, feminizing the hairline, feminizing rhinoplasty, upper lip lift, cheek augmentation, and procedures to round the jaw line, narrow and refine the chin, and reduce a prominent trachea (Adam's apple). To qualify, you must be at least 18 years old, have completed facial growth, and meet certain criteria.

