

Transgender teens have high rates of depression, suicidal thoughts

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Two-thirds of transgender teens have depression, and many also have suicidal thoughts and self-injuring behavior, according to research accepted for presentation at ENDO 2020, the Endocrine Society's annual

meeting, and publication in a special supplemental section of the *Journal of the Endocrine Society*.

Researchers also found transgender teens had significant improvement in [gender](#) dysphoria—the feeling of being uncomfortable with the gender they were assigned—after starting hormone therapy.

Transgender youth are children or adolescents who do not identify with the gender assigned at birth. "An increasing number of transgender youths are seeking therapeutic options to change their bodies and match their [gender identity](#)," said lead researcher Veronica Figueredo, M.D., of Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami, Fla.

The new study included a review of medical records of 158 transgender teens attending a pediatric endocrinology clinic between 2014 and 2019. The study participants included 107 (67.7%) affirmed males (female to male), 47 (29.7%) affirmed females (male to female), and 4 (2.5%) who considered themselves non-binary.

The median age when gender dysphoria began was lower in affirmed females. Among affirmed males, sexual orientation was self-reported as 38% straight, 47% bisexual, 12% gay, and 1% asexual. Among affirmed females, [sexual orientation](#) was reported as 54.3% straight, 37.1% bisexual and 8.6% gay.

Prevalence of psychiatric conditions was 78.5%, with depression being the most frequent diagnosis (66.5%). A history of [suicidal thoughts](#) was more common among affirmed males (70.1%) than affirmed females (49%). Self-injuring (cutting) was more common among affirmed males (56.1%) than in affirmed females (25.5%).

Mean age when hormonal treatment began was similar in both groups (15.75 years in affirmed males vs. 15.58 years in affirmed females).

Both affirmed males and affirmed females reported markedly lower gender dysphoria after starting hormonal treatment. On a scale of 0 (no dysphoria) to 10 (highest possible dysphoria), gender dysphoria dropped for affirmed males from 8.08 before starting treatment to 3.99 after starting treatment. For affirmed females, [gender dysphoria](#) ratings dropped from 7.87 before treatment to 2.96 after treatment began.

Provided by The Endocrine Society

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