

Transgender women may be more likely to have type 2 diabetes than cisgender women

November 30 2021



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Transgender women may be at higher risk for type 2 diabetes compared to cisgender women, but not to cisgender men, according to new research published in the Endocrine Society's *Journal of Clinical*

Endocrinology & Metabolism.

Nearly 1 million people identify as [transgender](#) in the United States, and health care providers are encountering more transgender and gender-diverse patients in their practices. An important priority of transgender health research is to better understand the metabolic changes induced by gender-affirming hormone therapy, and a specific area of interest is the occurrence of type 2 diabetes.

"Our study findings provide some reassurance that gender-affirming therapy does not increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, but our analysis was not designed to evaluate more subtle subclinical changes," said Noreen Islam, M.D., M.P.H., of Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Ga. "For this reason, [health care providers](#) should continue monitoring the metabolic status of individuals receiving gender-affirming therapy."

The researchers studied data from an electronic health record-based cohort study of people 18 years and older enrolled in three integrated health care systems over a 9-year period. The cohort included 2,869 [transgender women](#) matched to 28,300 cisgender women and 28,258 cisgender men; and 2,133 transgender men matched to 20,997 cisgender women and 20,964 cisgender men.

Type 2 diabetes was more common in transgender women compared to cisgender women. Cisgender is defined as a person whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth. The researchers found no significant differences in type 2 diabetes prevalence or incidence across the remaining comparison groups, both overall and in transgender people undergoing gender-affirming hormone therapy.

"Although more research is needed, there is little evidence that type 2 diabetes occurrence in either transgender women or transgender men is

attributable to gender-affirming [hormone therapy](#), at least in the short term," Islam said.

More information: Noreen Islam et al, Is There a Link Between Hormone Use and Diabetes Incidence in Transgender People? Data from the STRONG Cohort, *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* (2021). doi.org/10.1210/clinem/dgab832

Provided by The Endocrine Society

Citation: Transgender women may be more likely to have type 2 diabetes than cisgender women (2021, November 30) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-transgender-women-diabetes-cisgender.html>

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