

WHAT IS GENDER DYSPHORIA?

A medical diagnosis used by mental health professionals and medical providers to describe distressing feelings someone experiences because their gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. This term is also used by people who don't identify with their sex assigned at birth to describe the gender-related discomfort they feel.

Gender dysphoria is not something you have to feel in order to be trans, nonbinary, gender nonconforming, gender fluid, or any other gender that is different from your sex assigned at birth.



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Community Health
Access Initiative



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**RESILIENCE +
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**COPING
WITH
GENDER
DYSPHORIA**



WHAT DOES GENDER DYSPHORIA FEEL LIKE?

It's hard to say exactly what dysphoria feels like because each person has their own unique gender experiences, including their own feelings of discomfort or distress. Some people feel lots of distress related to their gender identity and expression and some people don't experience gender dysphoria at all. Some people might feel discomfort or distress, but they don't call it gender dysphoria.

Maybe you know you feel something, but you don't know how to describe it. Some people say they're feeling dysphoric if they...

... feel very uncomfortable about different parts of their body that don't match their gender.

... feel upset because the way they see their body is different from the way society genders their body.

... feel embarrassed when someone misgenders them or calls them by the wrong name.

... feel stressed by the gender roles and expectations associated with their sex assigned at birth.

You may feel similarly or not at all! That's okay! There's no one way to feel about gender. No matter how you feel...



**YOU
ARE
VALID.**

COPING WITH GENDER DYSPHORIA

Gender dysphoria can be hard to deal with because it may feel overwhelming at times and it might even make it hard to do the things you normally do. You're not alone in feeling that way and there are some things you can try that might help you feel better.

Wear Something That Makes You Feel Good About Yourself

Wearing clothing that makes you feel like yourself can help you get through the day. If you live with other people who are not supportive of your gender, wearing something that feels good to you underneath your other clothing can help too.

Find Something About Yourself You Do Feel Good About

It can be anything! Big or small! It could be related to your gender or not! If you're able, show yourself what you feel good about with photos or videos and look at them the next time you're feeling dysphoric.

Draw Yourself or Write About Yourself the Way You See Yourself

Having to wait to be yourself is not easy. You might be waiting to change your name or get a binder or breast forms or hormones or surgery. Drawing or writing about who you know you are allows you to be yourself right now and can give you something to look forward to.

Message a Supportive Friend, Family Member or Online Group

It's okay to tell someone else that you're feeling dysphoric. Even if they don't understand completely, telling someone else can make you feel less alone.

Find a Distraction

If you can't stop thinking about how uncomfortable or upset you're feeling, find something that will take you out of it. Watch your favorite movie or tv show, play a video game, or listen to your favorite music, practice a talent, exercise or do something for someone else.

Use a Photo Filter

Using photo filters on apps such as Instagram or Snapchat that make you look more how you see yourself can help you if you can't make the changes you want to right now.

Look at a Photo or Drawing of Yourself That You Think You Look Good In

If there's a picture or drawing of you feel good about keep it handy and look at it!

Change Your Hair

If it's safe for you, changing your hair style can help you feel more comfortable.

Make an Online Account

Having an online account that has your true name and pronouns can give you a space where you get to be yourself virtually if you don't have that chance in real life yet.

Say or Write Positive Affirmations

Tell yourself you love yourself, that you're desirable, you're worthy of love and friendship, and that you look cute! If you write them down, put them up where you'll see them often.

Take a Social Media Break

If you're spending a lot of time online comparing yourself to other people, take a break from social media and remind yourself that who you are and how you feel is valid.

Call or Chat a Crisis Line

If you're feeling so dysphoric you're thinking of hurting yourself, call the Trevor Lifeline at 1-866-488-7386 or TrevorChat at [thetrevorproject.org](https://www.thetrevorproject.org)