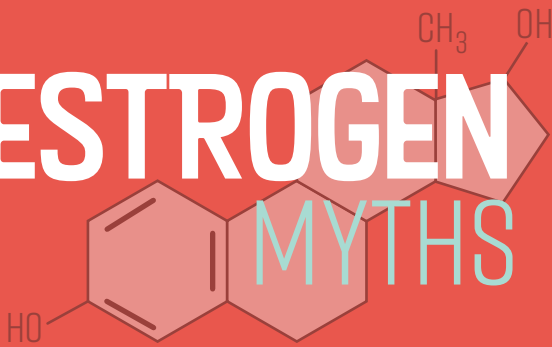


ESTROGEN

MYTHS



1 Hormones will make my voice more feminine.

Sadly, hormones can't make your voice more feminine. The best way to make your voice more feminine is by using voice feminization techniques and practicing these until you feel comfortable with your new voice. There are lots of great resources for this online!

2 Taking hormones will change my bone structure.

Hormones will change your body because of fat redistribution, but hormones won't change your bones. Fat redistribution can help fill out your hips, breasts, and even your cheeks, giving you a curvier figure. So even though your body will look different, your bone structure will not change.

3 Hormones take away facial and body hair.

Hormones can make the hair on your face and body softer and grow in more slowly, but cannot take away the hair. Some people have said that they notice less body hair after starting hormones. The only way to permanently remove facial or body hair is through electrolysis.

4 Changes will happen faster if I use more hormones or use hormones more often.

Taking twice the dose you are prescribed or taking hormones more often than prescribed could be harmful to you. It can be quite dangerous to take more estrogen than you are prescribed and you should follow the dose prescribed by your doctor. If you are having an issue with the dose you are on, please talk to your health care provider about changing your dose, but do not make these changes on your own.

5 Injectable estrogen is the best kind.

All kinds of estrogen will make your body more feminine and it hasn't been shown that injections work better than pills. The most important thing is finding a way of taking your estrogen that feels right for you and works for your life. Talk to your health care provider about the different options for taking estrogen.

6 If I take hormones, I won't want to have sex anymore.

Many people who are on estrogen or other feminizing hormones say they don't want to have sex as much as before. Hormones can make it harder to get an erection, which can be frustrating and might make you want to have sex less. Your sex drive might change after you start hormones, but this doesn't mean that you won't want to have sex at all. You might even enjoy sex more if you are feeling more comfortable in your body. You might also find new and exciting ways to have sex that work for you. If you are having issues enjoying sex you can talk to your health care provider, you don't have to deal with this on your own.

7 I will lose or waste my hormones if I cum.

Your body doesn't keep your hormones in your cum or pre-cum, so you don't need to worry about losing any of your hormones if you ejaculate. Masturbate and have safe, consensual sex as often as you want!

8 I can't take HIV meds or PrEP and hormones at the same time.

You can take HIV meds or PrEP and hormones at the same time! There are no medical reasons why someone cannot take HIV meds and PrEP at the same time they are on hormones. There are a few HIV meds that you shouldn't take at the same time as hormones, so make sure that your HIV doctor knows you are on hormones.

9 I'll grow breasts just like the other women in my family.

Breast growth is different from person to person or generation to generation. The women in your family may not be a good indicator of the breast growth you will have on hormones. Your breasts could continue to grow for about 2 or 3 years on hormones or you may decide that top surgery is a good option for you.

10 Estrogen will keep me from getting STDs.

Estrogen does not prevent you from getting HIV or other STDs. You will still need to use condoms, PrEP, and/or lube if you want to protect yourself when you're having sex. Talk to your health care provider if you have questions about safe sex practices, including PrEP, a pill that prevents HIV. Here are some additional online resources you can check out too!

HRC: Safer Sex for Trans Bodies

<http://www.hrc.org/resources/safer-sex-for-trans-bodies>

Brazen: Trans Women's Safer Sex Guide

<http://www.catie.ca/en/resources/brazen-trans-womens-safer-sex-guide>

SOURCE: Center of Excellence for Transgender Health, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of California San Francisco. Guidelines for the Primary and Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender Nonbinary People; 2nd edition. Deutsch MB, ed. June 2016. Available at www.transhealth.ucsf.edu/guidelines.



CENTER FOR SEXUALITY
& HEALTH DISPARITIES
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
www.sexualityandhealth.org

This project is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U22PS004520).

