

## Informed Consent for Masculinising Hormone Therapy

This informed consent form will explain the expected benefits and possible side effects of HRT so you can decide if it's something you would like to proceed with.

Please read through it carefully to make sure you have all the information needed to make an informed and confident decision.

By signing this form, you are stating that you have discussed the risks and benefits with your doctor or a member of the medical team and that you understand how these benefits and risks apply to you personally.

This consent form uses some medical terms and words for body functions and parts. If you do not understand a word or term, please ask.

### Glossary

The **cardiovascular** or circulatory, system supplies the body with blood. It consists of the heart, arteries, veins, and capillaries.

The **clitoris** is an erogenous organ capable of erection under sexual stimulation. It plays an important role in sexual response. The clitoris develops from the same embryonic mass of tissue as the penis.

**Fertility** is the ability to produce an offspring through reproduction.

**HRT** is an abbreviation for hormone replacement therapy.

To be **infertile** means that you wouldn't be able to get pregnant or conceive biological children of your own.

**Oestrogen** is a sex hormone that is largely made in the ovaries.

**Ovaries** are a pair of glands in which the eggs form and the sex hormones oestrogen and progesterone are made.

**Prolactin** is a hormone made by the pituitary gland, a small gland at the base of the brain.

**Testosterone** is a sex hormone that is made in the testicles. A bio-identical version of this hormone is used to masculinise the body.

## The Expected Effects of Masculinising Hormone Therapy

It may take several months for masculine changes to become noticeable in the body and usually take up to 3 to 5 years to be complete. Because each person responds to hormone therapy differently, it is difficult to predict how you and your body will respond.

**Permanent Changes** (these will not go away, even if you decide to stop HRT):

- The pitch of your voice becomes deeper.
- Increased growth, thickening and darkening of hair on the body.
- Growth of facial hair.
- Possible hair loss at the temples and crown of the head with possible complete baldness.
- Increase in the size of the clitoris.

**Non-Permanent Changes** (these will likely reverse if HRT is stopped):

- Menstrual periods may stop.
- Possible weight gain. If you gain weight, this fat will tend to go to the abdomen and mid-section, rather than the buttocks, hips and thighs, making the body look more masculine.
- Increased muscle mass and upper body strength
- Possible feeling of more physical energy
- Skin changes, including acne that may be severe
- Increased sex drive
- Changes in mood or thinking may occur. Some people find that their mental health improves after starting hormone therapy. The effects of hormones on the brain are not fully understood.

**I have questions about the possible effects of hormone therapy.** \_\_\_\_\_

**My GP or a member of the medical team has answered my questions about the effects of HRT.** \_\_\_\_\_

## Testosterone Therapy and Fertility

Testosterone therapy may cause a loss of fertility; you may not be able to get pregnant after being on testosterone for some time; how long this might take to be a permanent effect is unknown. Please ask about your fertility preservation options if you are hoping to conceive biological children in the future.

Testosterone is not reliable birth control, however - even if your periods stop, you could get pregnant. If you are having penetrative sex with a sperm-producing partner, you should discuss using some form of contraception.

If you do get pregnant while taking testosterone, the high levels of testosterone in your system may result in harm to your foetus.

Other effects of testosterone on the ovaries and on developing eggs are not fully known.

## The Risks and Possible Side Effects of Testosterone Therapy

- Some people develop pelvic pain on testosterone which may settle. If it persists please talk to your medical provider about possible causes.
- The lining of the cervix and walls of the vagina may become drier and more fragile; this may cause irritation and discomfort. It also may make you more susceptible to sexually transmitted infections and HIV if you have unprotected penetrative sex.
- The effects on the risk of breast, uterine and ovarian cancer is not known.
- Possible changes in cholesterol, higher blood pressure and other changes to the body that might lead to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease (heart attacks, strokes and blockages in the arteries).
- Possible changes in the body that might increase the risk of developing diabetes.
- Increased appetite and increased weight gain from both muscle and fat.
- Increased risk of sleep apnoea (breathing problems while you are sleeping).
- Changes in liver function (this will be monitored) as the liver will be working harder to metabolise the additional hormone load.
- An increase in the haemoglobin and haematocrit (the number of red blood cells) which may cause problems with circulation, such as blood clots, strokes and heart attacks (this will be monitored).
- Increased sweating.
- Possible worsening or triggering of headaches and migraines.

**I have questions about the risks of hormone therapy.** \_\_\_\_\_

**My GP or a member of the medical team has answered my questions about the risks of HRT.** \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that smoking may greatly increase the risk of blood clots and cardiovascular disease. If you smoke, you should try to cut back or quit; your GP should be able to provide help with this.

**I would like to discuss ways to help me quit smoking.** \_\_\_\_\_

## Important Notes

- Taking testosterone in doses that are higher than recommended will increase the risks of testosterone treatment and higher doses will not necessarily work better to masculinize the body. Abnormally high amounts of testosterone can be converted to oestrogen that may interfere with masculinization.
- If you are having surgery of any kind, please make sure that your surgical team knows that you are taking HRT so that steps can be taken to prevent blood clots around the time of surgery.
- You may choose to stop hormone therapy at any time and for any reason. You are encouraged to discuss this decision with your medical provider.
- If there are safety concerns about your treatment these will be discussed with you first. Sometimes your HRT may need to be reduced or temporarily stopped.

### By signing this form, you agree to:

- Work with your medical provider to establish optimal and safe dosing of HRT and/or other elements of trans-affirming health care.
- Inform your medical provider if you are taking or start taking any other prescription drugs, dietary supplement, herbal or homeopathic drugs, or street drugs or alcohol so that you can discuss possible interactions with and effects on your hormone treatment.
- Inform your medical provider of any new physical symptoms or any medical conditions that may develop before or while you are taking HRT. Please inform your GP if you think you are having side effects from the medications, including mental health changes.
- Keep regular follow up appointments; this may include regular blood tests, medication reviews and cancer screening appointments (mammography, smears etc).

**I have questions about my rights and responsibilities with taking hormone therapy.** \_\_\_\_\_

**My GP or a member of the medical team has discussed my questions with me.** \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, you acknowledge that you have adequate information and knowledge to be able to make a decision about hormone therapy and that you understand the information your medical provider has given you.

**Based on this information I choose to start testosterone HRT.**

Patient signature

Date