

# LGBTQIA+ Terminology

## Definitions:

**LGTBQIA+:** An abbreviation for people who identify as lesbian (L), gay (G), bisexual (B), transgender (T), queer (Q), questioning (Q), intersex (I), and asexual (A). “The “+” represents those who are part of the community but for whom LGBTQ does not accurately capture or reflect their identity.” [1]

**Transgender:** “Describes a person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth do not correspond. Also used as an umbrella term to include gender identities outside of male and female. Sometimes abbreviated as trans.” [1]

**Cisgender:** “A term used to refer to an individual whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.” [2]

**Gender-expansive, genderqueer, nonbinary:** “All different terms for a broad category of gender identities in which the individual identifies outside of a binary concept of gender (binary meaning “male” and “female”). This can mean identifying as both feminine and masculine, or as neither.” [1]

**Gender identity:** “A person’s innate sense of their own gender. It does not necessarily correspond to anatomy, sex assigned at birth, or how someone expresses themselves. Examples include, but are not limited to, cis woman, cis man, trans man, trans woman, nonbinary, gender expansive, and gender “fluid” (as opposed to “fixed”). Not the same as sexual orientation.” [1]

**Gender incongruence, formerly “gender dysphoria” or “gender identity disorder”:** “Incongruence between an individual’s experienced or expressed gender and their assigned sex. Dysphoria refers particularly to suffering as a consequence of this incongruence.” [1]

**Affirming care:** “Refers to care that supports a patient’s gender identity, and must include inclusive terminology, practices, insurance coverage, and knowledgeable providers.” [1]

**Colactation:** “When more than one parent breast/chestfeeds their child.” [1]

**Chestfeeding:** “A term used by many masculine identified trans people to describe the act of feeding their baby from their chest, regardless of whether they have had chest/top surgery (to alter or remove mammary tissue).” [1]

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**Transition:** “A term used to refer to the process--social, legal, and/or medical--one goes through to affirm one’s gender identity. For some, this means changing hair styles, clothing, and other forms of gender expression. For others, this means changing names, pronouns, and identification documents, while for others, this may include gender-affirming medical care such as taking puberty blockers, taking hormones; and having gender-affirming surgeries. There is no one way to transition--the word means something to each individual. The validity of an individual’s gender identity does not depend on any social, legal, and/or medical transition; the self-identification itself is what validates the gender identity. Many individuals choose not to or are unable to transition for a wide range of reasons both within and beyond their control.” [2]

**Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT):** “A type of gender-affirming treatment that allows trans and gender-expansive people to medically transition or feel more at home in their bodies. Those taking testosterone (masculinizing hormones) may grow more facial/body hair and notice their voices deepening. Those taking estrogen (feminizing hormones) may see some breast growth and decreased libido. Many intersex people take HRT to balance the naturally occurring levels of estrogen and testosterone in their bodies. Benefits of such therapy can include improved mental and physical wellness, and reduced anxiety and dysphoria, for those who experience it.” [2]

**Gender-affirming surgery (GAS):** “Surgical procedures that can help people adjust their bodies to match their innate gender identity more closely. Used interchangeably with gender affirmation, gender confirmation, and gender-confirming surgery. Not every transgender person will desire or have resources for gender-affirming surgery. Use this term in place of the older term sex change. Also sometimes referred to as gender reassignment surgery, genital reconstruction surgery, or medical transition.” [2]

## Reference List

1. Ferri RL, Rosen-Carole CB, Jackson J, Carreno-Rijo E, Greenberg KB; Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine. ABM Clinical Protocol #33: Lactation Care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Plus Patients. *Breastfeed Med.* 2020 May;15(5):284-293. Epub 2020 Apr 24.
2. PFLAG National Glossary. pflag.org. <https://pflag.org/glossary/>. Accessed June 7th, 2024.