

## SUMMARY

## DECISION SUPPORT

## PATIENT EDUCATION/SELF MANAGEMENT

**HORMONE THERAPY: MALE TO FEMALE**

- ◆ Changing your gender is a serious and possibly dangerous process.
- ◆ The normal process of going through puberty is gradual and transforming to another gender also takes time. This transformation can be very hard on your body.
- ◆ There are many things you can do to get the safest and best results for your body and mind like:
  - Not smoking
  - Not drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs
  - Maintaining a healthy weight
  - Getting regular exercise
- ◆ You should only trust information you get from your medical and mental health providers.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ESTROGEN THERAPY**

- The feminizing effects of estrogen can take many months to be noticed and several years to be complete.
- Some changes to your body will be permanent, even if you stop taking estrogen, including:
  - \* Breast development
    - You will need to learn to do monthly breast self-examinations, have an annual medical exam, and you will need to have mammograms after age 50.
  - \* Changes in fertility and sperm production
    - Estrogen can cause sperm to stop maturing and may cause infertility. Even if estrogen is stopped, the ability to make healthy sperm may or may not come back.
- Taking estrogen will not protect you from sexually transmitted diseases.
- Estrogen may cause migraine headaches.
- Estrogen is a very strong medication with possibly serious side effects. It must be used carefully and must be monitored regularly. Take estrogen only as directed by your health care provider. The correct dosage for you may not be the same as someone else. Dangerous side effects can include:
 

• Blood clots	• Breast cancer
• Clinical depression	• Stroke
• Heart Disease	• Liver disease
- Estrogen may raise your risk of heart disease, just like smoking cigarettes. Smoking is not allowed within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. If you choose to smoke, your health care provider may not prescribe estrogen or may prescribe lower doses. It is important to reduce other risk factors for heart disease, like high cholesterol and being overweight.
- You can choose to stop taking estrogen at any time. Your health care provider can also stop your treatment for medical reasons. If you stop taking estrogen, you must follow a plan to reduce the dose gradually to avoid harmful side effects.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO DO**

- Tell your health care provider if you are taking any dietary supplements, herbs, *drugs (legal or illegal) obtained in prison, other than those prescribed for you* or other medications.
- Alcohol, smoking, and drug abuse must be controlled before estrogen therapy is started.
- If you are in the mental health services delivery system, continue care with your mental health provider . If you feel you need mental health services submit a CDCR 7362 request or notify a staff member.
- You will be asked to sign an informed consent form before starting estrogen therapy.

**☞ If you have any questions, talk to your health care or mental health provider ☞**

## SUMMARY

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## PATIENT EDUCATION/SELF MANAGEMENT

**HORMONE THERAPY: FEMALE TO MALE**

- ◆ Changing your gender is a serious and possibly dangerous process.
- ◆ The normal process of going through puberty is gradual and transforming to another gender also takes time. This transformation can be very hard on your body.
- ◆ There are many things you can do to get the safest and best results for your body and mind like:
  - Not smoking
  - Not drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs
  - Maintaining a healthy weight
  - Getting regular exercise
- ◆ You should only trust information you get from your medical and mental health providers.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TESTOSTERONE THERAPY**

- The masculinizing effects of testosterone can take many months to be noticed and many years to be complete.
- Some changes to your body will be permanent, even if you stop taking testosterone, including:
  - \* Hair loss
  - \* Facial hair growth and increased body hair
  - \* Deepening of your voice
- Taking testosterone will not protect you from sexually transmitted diseases or from becoming pregnant.
- Testosterone may effect fertility. If you take testosterone for a long time, you may not be able to get pregnant in the future, even if you stop taking testosterone.
- Testosterone is a very strong medication with possibly serious side effects. It must be used carefully and must be monitored regularly. Take testosterone only as directed by your health care provider. The correct dosage for you may not be the same as someone else. Dangerous side effects can include:
 

• Blood clots	• High blood pressure	• Liver disease
• Clinical depression	• Breast and/or uterine cancer	• Aggressive behavior/hostility
• Heart Disease	• Stroke	
- Testosterone may raise your risk of getting diabetes in the future.
- Testosterone may raise your risk of heart disease, just like smoking cigarettes. Smoking is not allowed within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. If you choose to smoke, your health care provider may not prescribe testosterone or may prescribe lower doses. It is important to reduce other risk factors for heart disease, like high cholesterol and being overweight.
- You can choose to stop taking testosterone at any time. Your health care provider can also stop your treatment for medical reasons. If you stop taking testosterone, you must follow a plan to reduce the dose slowly to avoid harmful side effects.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO DO**

- Tell your health care provider if you are taking any dietary supplements, herbs, *drugs (legal or illegal) obtained in prison, other than those prescribed for you* or other medications
- Alcohol, smoking, and drug abuse must be controlled before testosterone therapy is started.
- If you are in the mental health services delivery system, continue care with your mental health provider . If you feel you need mental health services submit a CDCR 7362 request or notify a staff member.
- You will be asked to sign an informed consent form before starting testosterone therapy.

**☞ If you have any questions, talk to your health care or mental health provider ☞**