

**Hormone Options:**  
*Progesterone Therapy*

The benefit of progestins for gender affirmation is not well established. Some patients and medical providers report progesterone may help improve breast development, promote improvement in mood and libido, and have other positive benefits. However, progesterone has also been known to cause weight gain, fatigue, irritability and negative mood changes in other individuals. Progesterone is part of a cisgender female’s hormonal makeup, and may be desired on this basis as part of a patient’s gender affirming hormone therapy. It is important to weigh the benefits vs potential risks of starting progesterone.

In a few studies progesterone has been shown to play a role in suppressing testosterone production, which supports its use as another, or alternative, anti-androgen when needed. Progesterone may be considered if estrogen alone or estrogen and spironolactone are not effective in adequately suppressing testosterone.

Micronized progesterone (Prometrium) is the bioidentical formulation and appears to be the safest option in terms of cardiovascular health.

Oral	
<b>Medication name</b>	Prometrium (micronized progesterone), 100 mg, 200mg capsules
<b>Frequency</b>	By mouth once daily, or cyclical dosing (10 days every month)
<b>Additional comments</b>	<p>Some patients may prefer cyclic dosing as its effects may mimic a menstrual cycle, which can be affirming for some. However, others may find the hormonal fluctuations with cyclic dosing troubling, and may prefer to take this medication daily.</p> <p>Progesterone’s role in breast development has yet to be proven. Reported increases in breast size seem most likely due to general weight gain and fat deposition in the breasts as caused by progesterone and estrogen, and not the direct effect of progesterone on the breast tissue itself. So far, there is no evidence to show any specific benefit (or lack of benefit) regarding progesterone’s effect on breast development.</p>
<b>Medication name</b>	Provera (medroxyprogesterone acetate)
<b>Frequency</b>	By mouth once daily or injected every 3 months (Depo Provera)
<b>Additional comments</b>	<p>Medroxyprogesterone has been shown to have a slightly higher risk of blot clotting than micronized progesterone. In addition, this medication has been associated with bone loss in cisgender women, as well as mood changes (irritability, depression). The benefit may be the 3 month injectable dosing, but the risks may outweigh the benefits in many individuals.</p>