

CHEST BINDING

HEALTH AND SAFETY

WHAT'S CHEST BINDING?

Chest binding is when someone flattens their breast tissue to help curb body dysphoria*, or to feel more comfortable in their body.

You don't have to be transgender or have dysphoria to chest bind, cisgender women, nonbinary folks, gender non-conforming folks, queer folks, and many more people find comfort in chest-binding. Binding is a personal choice, not a requirement.

*Dysphoria is when someone experiences discomfort or distress due to their physical expression not matching their gender identity.



WHAT DO YOU USE TO BIND?

While it's cheaper to use household objects to bind, using things like ace bandages, KT tape, or multiple layered sports bras can risk permanent damage, internal injuries, and broken bones. Using chest binders from dedicated binder companies, or compression sports bras are safer ways to curb dysphoria. Some folks find wearing a tank top underneath a binder can help with chafing, sweat, and binder maintenance.

BINDER SIZING

If you're considering getting a binder, it's important to make sure you're getting the correct size. A binder that's too big can cause chafing, a binder that's too small can risk permanent medical damage. Most binder companies will guide you through the measuring process, you'll need a flexible measuring tape and a mirror to make sure you're measuring in the right places.

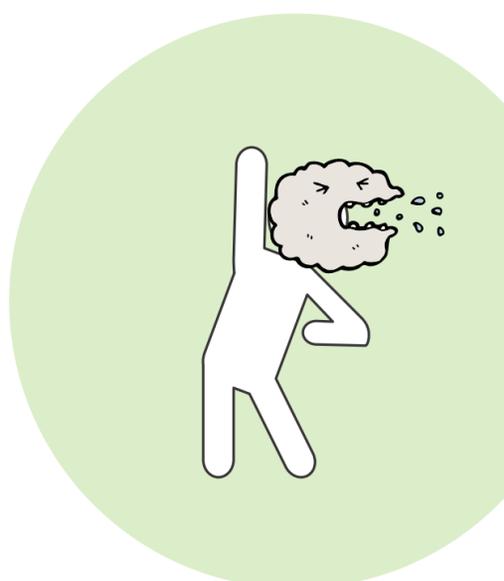


BINDER MAINTENANCE

Your binder will last the longest if it is washed by hand with a mild detergent. If machine washed, use the "delicate" setting air dry overnight and it should be fully dry in the morning! Make sure to check the stitching frequently, frayed or torn binders can become uncomfortable to wear.

BINDER SAFETY

Listen to your body! If you're new to binding, begin by wearing your binder for an hour at a time to adjust. Don't bind for more than eight hours at a time, and take breaks if you can. Remember to stretch regularly to encourage blood flow. Upon removing your binder, raise your hands above your head and cough, this helps to relax your body after being compressed. Don't sleep in your binder, and remove your binder if you have trouble breathing.



FREE BINDER PROGRAMS

If you can't afford a binder, there are programs that will discreetly ship one to you for free. Most programs have long waiting lists, so if your need is immediate look for local LGBTQ+ like ARAY that have binder closets or funding. Check out the links below for more information on binder donation programs:

- <https://forms.gle/9Vi5RpRa3iXLyrNx6> - ARAY Application
- <https://www.ftm essentials.com/pages/ftme-free-youth-binder-program>

