

Transgender youth face higher risk of conditions that affect heart health

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Transgender youth have higher odds than cisgender youth of being diagnosed with medical conditions that can affect their overall metabolic and cardiovascular health, according to a study presented virtually at ENDO 2021, the Endocrine Society's annual meeting.

The study included 4,174 youth with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria, a term for a deep sense of unease and distress that may occur when a person's gender identity does not match their sex designated at birth. An estimated 1.8% of adolescents identify as transgender, according to lead researcher Anna Valentine, M.D., of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, a provider at Children's Hospital Colorado in Aurora, Colo.

"This is the first study of its size in the United States of which we are aware that looks at the odds of youth with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria having medical diagnoses that relate to overall metabolic and [cardiovascular health](#)," Valentine said.

The researchers compared transgender youth with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria to 16,651 control youth without a diagnosis of gender dysphoria. The study calculated the odds of having overweight/obesity, [high blood pressure](#), abnormal levels of cholesterol, high blood sugar levels, liver dysfunction and [polycystic ovary syndrome](#). The authors first looked at the odds of having a diagnosis of one of these conditions listed in the chart, and then looked at diagnoses along with an objective body mass index from the weight/height in the chart, actual blood pressure measurements or objective laboratory measures.

When looking at diagnosis/billing codes with objective measures listed in the chart, the study found that [transgender youth](#) were 1.8x as likely to have abnormal cholesterol levels, 1.4x as likely to have liver dysfunction and 1.3x as likely to have

high blood pressure when compared with cisgender youth. Transgender males were 1.5x as likely to be overweight or obese, and 1.9x as likely to have polycystic ovary syndrome, a common hormonal disorder that affects metabolic and [reproductive health](#).

"As research in pediatric transgender medicine is emerging, showing what [medical conditions](#) are being diagnosed more often in this population can help individuals, families and health care providers better manage their health," Valentine said.

Provided by The Endocrine Society

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