

## BENEFITS OF BINDING



Binding involves wearing tight garments to flatten out your chest. It's a do-it-yourself option for changing your appearance so that it matches your gender expression.

You might bind to:

- Feel more at ease in your body
- Feel more comfortable in your clothing
- Help others read your gender correctly



## THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT BINDING



This information is provided to help reduce the unintended side effects of binding.

For more information, please visit [www.transcarebc.ca](http://www.transcarebc.ca)

# CHEST BINDERS



## The most popular choice:

Binders can be bought online, and in some shops serving LGBT2Q+ communities. They usually look like tank-tops. Some pull down over your head, while others open and close with zippers or Velcro. It can be helpful to try out different options to see what feels best for your body. Binders can be expensive. If cost is a barrier, contact Trans Care BC to see if there is a free binder exchange near you.



## Alternatives to chest binders:

- Medical compression shirts
- Tight-fitting undershirts
- Sports bras made with lots of Lycra
- Athletic compression shirts from sporting goods stores

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT WITH BINDING

### Possible downsides:

- Sore back and shoulder muscles
- Acne on your back and chest
- Irritated skin
- Feeling uncomfortably warm in the summer months
- Some conditions, such as asthma, may be made worse by binding.
- Reduced skin elasticity on your chest. If you are planning on getting chest surgery, reduced skin elasticity may affect your surgical choices.
- Wrapping your chest with ace bandages, saran wrap or tape is not recommended because it can make it hard to take a full breath.

### Health and safety tips:

- It's important that your binder is the right size for you. It should allow you to breathe freely and not cause pain or skin damage.
- Make sure your skin is completely dry before putting on a binder. Body powder can help.
- Avoid binding for more than eight (8) hours a day.
- Learn exercises and stretches to strengthen your back, shoulders, and chest wall to help ease some of the pain caused by binding.
- Keep your binder clean to help avoid skin problems. Generally speaking, hand washing your binder is best. Avoid using bleach or putting it in the dryer.
- See a clinician if you experience pain, difficulty breathing, ongoing tingling/numbness, skin rash, or sores.