Some transgender women use estrogen as part of their hormone therapy for gender affirmation. Estrogen helps transgender women align their bodies with their female gender identity. Gender affirmation with hormone therapy has benefits such as improved quality of life and reduced depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. However, estrogen use in transgender women may have long-term risks to heart health.

Findings
A recent PCORI-funded study found that transgender women taking estrogen for gender affirmation had a higher risk of stroke and blood clots than nontransgender women and nontransgender men. The highest risk differences were found several years after starting estrogen.

Working with Your Doctor to Avoid Health Problems from Using Estrogen

- Learn about the benefits and risks of using estrogen, as well as about any other gender-affirming hormone therapy options.
- Schedule regular check-ups with your primary care doctor to check your heart health while using estrogen, even if you’ve stopped using estrogen.
- Information about healthcare practices for transgender patients taking hormones is available to you and your primary care doctor through the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) and the Center of Excellence for Transgender Health at the University of California San Francisco.
What You Can Do to Reduce Your Risk for Blood Clots and Stroke

Organizations such as the American Heart Association provide advice on ways to reduce your risk of getting a blood clot or having a stroke. This advice includes the following:

- If you smoke, work on stopping. Smoking further increases your risk for clots and stroke. Ask your doctor about getting help to quit smoking.
- Stay physically active. Finding activities you like to do, such as dancing or walking with friends, can help.
- Make healthy food choices.
- Have your blood pressure checked regularly.
- Talk to your doctor about how to recognize the signs of blood clots and strokes. Symptoms of blood clots include swelling, pain or tenderness, discoloration and unusual warmth in an arm or leg, chest pain and heavy breathing, shortness of breath, sudden cough, and chronic headaches.

Symptoms of stroke can be remembered using the letters F-A-S-T:

- Face Drooping
- Arms Weakened
- Speech Slurred
- Time to Call 9-1-1

Read More About This Study At: https://www.pcori.org/Goodman076

SOURCES