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Adolescent development and psychosocial functioning after starting cross-sex hormones for gender dysphoria

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Abstract

Purpose: To assess how adolescent development progresses and psychiatric symptoms develop among transsexual adolescents after starting cross-sex hormone treatment. **Materials and methods:** Retrospective chart review among 52 adolescents who came into gender identity assessment before age 18, were diagnosed with transsexualism and started hormonal gender reassignment. The subjects were followed over the so-called real-life phase of gender reassignment. **Results:** Those who did well in terms of psychiatric symptoms and functioning before cross-sex hormones mainly did well during real-life. Those who had psychiatric treatment needs or problems in school, peer relationships and managing everyday matters outside of home continued to have problems during real-life. **Conclusion:** Medical gender reassignment is not enough to improve functioning and relieve psychiatric comorbidities among adolescents with gender dysphoria. Appropriate interventions are warranted for psychiatric comorbidities and problems in adolescent development.

Keywords: Gender dysphoria; adolescence; adolescent development; cross-sex hormones; transsexualism.

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