

Resources for People who Identify as Intersex

Intersex refers to individuals who are born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that might not align with the male-female binary that is common in American society. For example, one intersex person may look visibly female yet retain male-typical internal organs. Another intersex person may have genitalia that contain qualities that are typically associated with male and female individuals, such as a notably small penis with scrotal folding that resembles a labia. Other people who are intersex may never know until reaching puberty or adulthood. These examples hope to portray the incredibly wide diversity of experiences among the intersex community. It's also important to note that intersex refers to a socially constructed term to represent real biological variation that is more common than the general public realize. Among the medical community, intersex may also be referred to as "differences in sex development." InterACT, described below, provides an [Intersex 101](#) information for those unfamiliar with this community.

There is a history of injustices committed and non-consensual procedures completed on intersex patients. In these cases, healthcare providers may have diagnosed a difference in sex development after childbirth or during youth; consequently, providers and parents have assigned the child what they considered an appropriate gender and completed procedures to align their sexual organs with this chosen gender. [This is no longer considered appropriate and ethical care in the United States](#), largely in part due to the advocacy and activism of the intersex community. [Providers are now recommended to refer their patients to multidisciplinary clinics that specialize in competent and culturally sensitive care for the intersex community. Much is still to be learned about the long-term health issues related to intersex patients.](#)

The [Intersex Society of North America](#) hopes to end shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgeries for people born with an anatomy that someone decided is not standard for male or female. Their website includes resources written by members of the intersex community for patients, families, and providers. They also maintain information about support groups for different intersex traits.

[InterACT](#) is an organization that advocates for the human rights of children born with intersex traits, notably through legal means. Below are different resources offered:

- [Know Your Rights](#) offers information to parents about the rights of their children.
- [What We Wish Our Teachers Knew](#) informs educators about how to make intersex children feel safe, understood, and included.
- [What We Wish Our Friends Knew](#) helps build safe and respectful social networks of intersex patients.
- [What We Wish Our Doctors Knew](#) educates providers about how to interact with and provide care.
- [What We Wish Our Parents Knew](#) aids parents in supporting the experiences and struggles of their children.