

HEALTHY CHEST BINDING

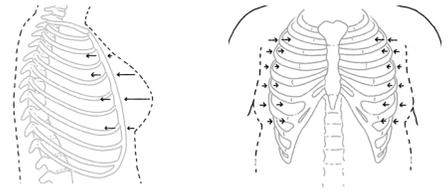
Facts & Tips for Physical Therapists & Chiropractors



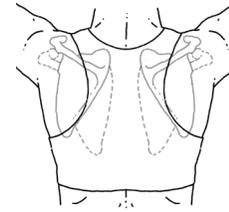
Chest binding is a **healthy practice** for most gender-expansive patients.



Chest binding is **life-saving** for people battling gender dysphoria.



Compression of the Ribcage



Scapular Immobilization



A chest binder is a **tank-style garment** or **kinetic tape** worn on the chest to compress tissue.

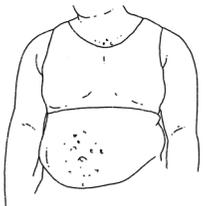


A binder is **not** a corset or tape/bandage wrapped around the ribcage.

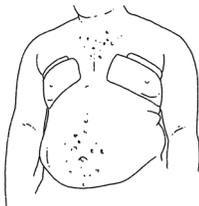


A binder is **not** a fashion accessory.

Safe Binding Methods

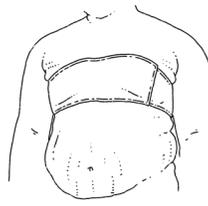


Tank Binder



Kinetic Tape

Unsafe Binding Method



Wrap Binder

Common Musculoskeletal Complications of Binding

- Limited thoracic spine extension
- Limited ROM of thoracic cage
- Limited ROM in external rotation at the shoulder joint
- Costochondritis
- Slipping rib syndrome
- Rib bruising, misalignment, and dislocation
- Thoracic Outlet Syndrome (vascular TOS is very rare)

Muscles to Evaluate for Constriction and/or Weakness

- Pectoralis Major and Minor
- Serratus Anterior
- Rotator cuff muscles
- Intercostal muscles
- Rectus Abdominus
- Upper and mid Trapezius
- Sternocleidomastoid

Impact of Binding on Breath

- Reduced lung capacity, especially with binder on but lasting constriction often develops
- Over-reliance on secondary muscles of respiration
- Exacerbate asthma symptoms

Harm Reduction Approach

- ✗ Avoid **judgemental language** about the practice of binding
- ✗ Avoid **blanket prohibitions** on binding
- ✓ Educate patients about how binding is **impacting their body**
- ✓ Support patient in **reducing pain** while continuing to bind

Common Barriers to Treatment

- ✗ Patient may be **uncomfortable** without a binder, especially in common areas of clinic
- ✗ Patient's breath capacity may **limit stamina** in cardio activities
- ✓ Patient's **preferences** on wearing/not wearing binder may **fluctuate** between appointments

For more resources about binding visit www.healthybinding.com or read *Healthy Chest Binding for Trans and Nonbinary People: A Practical Guide*