

AUGS Position Statement – Gender Identification

The ***American Urogynecologic Society*** (AUGS) does not support recent calls to define gender as male or female based on genitalia at birth. This political oversimplification does not reflect current social, medical or scientific understanding.

An individual's gender identity is informed by multiple factors, including genes, the production and activity of hormones, physical anatomy including genitalia, and psychological and cultural influences. Science has shown that these factors do not always align within some individuals. Studies have also shown that optimizing the mental health of these individuals is best achieved by allowing them to self-identify their own gender. Efforts to assign gender based on limited criteria, such as genitalia, can result in gender dysphoria. Importantly, for those who experience such distress, the causes are not only due to psychological or behavioral issues, but also biological ones related to genetics or hormonal influence before birth.

AUGS advocates for a more evidence-based and encompassing interpretation of gender, and for the avoidance of limited and often discriminatory definitions. Modern science should be used to inform public health policy.

(Approved by the AUGS Board of Directors, October 2018)