



Rethink what a binder feels like...

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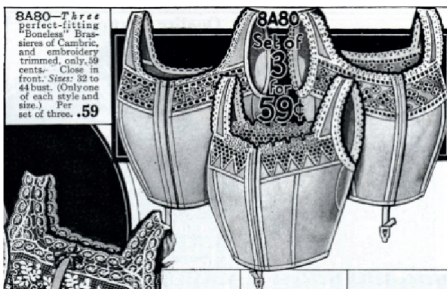
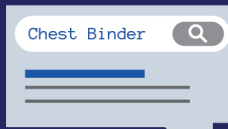
@spectrumoutfitters

Information about Binding

So, You're Thinking about Binding?

That's Ok, lots of people do. It's possible that you may have some reservations or fears regarding compression garments, so we have put together a brief overview to help. It's good that you are concerned about your health; we want you to take good care of yourself while being yourself!

*same goes for all the parents, guardians, and other supportive adults that have young people thinking about wearing a binder. Thanks for reading!



A chest binder is a compression top that is worn to flatten chest tissue. People of many gender expressions wear binders including some cis women. For most people binding is used to create a more "masculine" silhouette.

As a parent or outsider you may be wondering why the person in question wants to bind their chest.

Binders are non surgical and minimally invasive. For someone who feels dysphoria about their chest they may wish to bind to see how it makes them feel and to help them to make an informed decision if they feel that surgery could be an option in future.

Some people bind on occasion, when they feel it helps them express themselves and their gender identity. Some people wear a binder everyday. Some people choose not to bind their chest for personal or medical reasons. Before getting a binder, consider what binding means to you and what you will need it for.

Throughout history, there have been examples of many different gender expressions. These date as far back as Ancient Egypt. In the 1920s when Flapper style was fashionable, women would wear binder-like corsets to fit the slim straight dresses.

Today people wear binders to perform as drag kings, to cosplay, to go to school, to fit a suit at a wedding, to work in every industry. We have come a long way with binder technology since the roaring Twenties.

In this booklet we have included some stretches to do after wearing a binder, some information on how to be more safe while binding and to make an informed decision.

Stretches

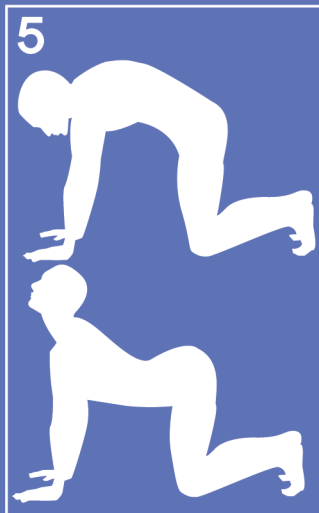
You should take breaks from binding and stretch your chest, shoulders neck and back to help prevent bad posture or pain. Here are 5 simple stretches that may work for you once you have removed your binder. We encourage you to research and find what works for you and your body.

1. Standing Stretch: Stand with your feet hip width apart with your back straight. Interlock your fingers behind you. Push your arms up and back away from your body until you feel the stretch and hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat once more.

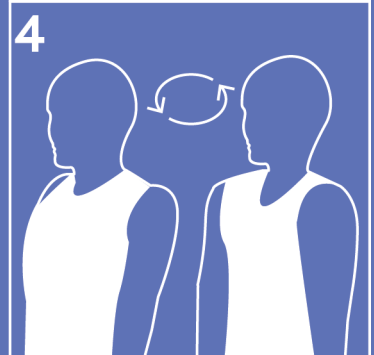
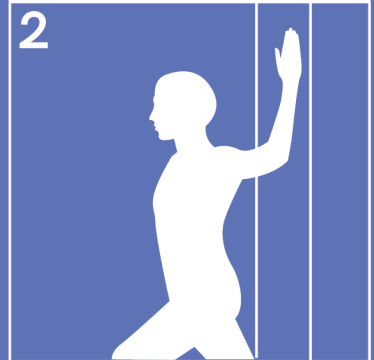
2. Doorway Stretch: Stand in a doorway with one foot in front of the other. If you are stretching your left pectoral muscle, your right leg should be in front of you and slightly bent. When stretching your right chest muscle, put your left leg in front of you. Bend one arm at a 90° angle and place your palm on the door frame. Carefully lean forward on the side that you're stretching. You should feel your chest open and stretch. Turn your head in the opposite direction of the stretch if you feel you want increase it and stretch the neck. Hold for 15-30 seconds.

3. Corner Stretch: Stand 1ft from a corner with your dominant leg in front of you with your legs slightly bent. Your dominant foot should be closer to the corner than the rest of your body. Your back should be straight and your shoulders should be squared. Your dominant foot is on the same side as the hand that you write with.

4. Shoulder Rolls: Maintain good posture while standing or sitting. Roll your shoulders up, back, and down. Do this movement 10 times. Then, roll your shoulders up, forward, and down 10 times.



5. Cat/Cow Stretch: This is a yoga pose, a yoga class/ youtube yoga routine would be excellent to help with binding aftercare. Place your hands underneath your shoulders and your knees underneath your hips. On an inhale, fill your belly with air and let it sink down as you look up. Exhale as you engage your abdominals, tuck your chin into your chest, and round your spine. Continue this movement for a few minutes, paying special attention to your shoulders.



Rib Safety

When we bind the intention is to compress the soft tissue without compressing the ribs. People often make the mistake of thinking that a smaller binder will make them look flatter, when it actually ends up making them look the same as a larger binder would, but it can have adverse health effects. **Once you have compressed your soft chest tissue to a certain point, from then on you are just compressing your ribs.**

Double Binding (wearing more than one binder or compression method)

Never double bind, a binder is designed to work on its own. Adding extra compression will be too much and will cause pain.

Wearing a binder for too long (over 8 hours)

We understand that there are circumstances that prevent this such as long work hours, however remove your

binder as soon as possible and stretch! You can also take breaks, 5 minutes in the bathroom or other private space if possible.

For people under 18, we recommend taking it off after 6 hours (see next page for info on age).

Binding while exercising

If you are going to exercise while wearing a binder we recommend you wear a size up. This goes for swimming and other cardio exercises. If you are going to be lifting weights it would be preferable to wear a sports bra or similar as your body will be under more physical pressure.



NEVER USE: Duct Tape, Bandages or KT Tape

These are not designed to stretch and could cause you to break your ribs! The tapes stickiness can pull your skin and cause stretch marks and irritation and damage the tissue.

There are also cheap binder-like garments online, usually from China. These have and will crack ribs. Please only purchase from a specialist binder seller.



Are binders safe for my child?
What effect will it have?

???



Overheating

Wearing a binder will make you warmer as you are wearing another layer. In summer this can get quite hot and sweaty. You must keep an eye on lightheadedness and dehydration.

Breast Changes

It is possible that over time binding could change the overall appearance of your chest. As the binder holds your chest flat to your body it can cause the tissue to become flatter. The extent depends on a combination of things including: how often you bind, your chest size, your genetics, and if you are taking hormones.

Testosterone can increase these changes to the chest. It is likely if you don't bind very often that you won't notice a difference. Changes like this usually take years of binding to become more prominent.

Skin care

These garments are tight and are made of strong materials so it is important to look after your skin as it may get rubbed or chafed. They do soften to a varying degree over time and washing with fabric softener can help. However, if you have sensitive skin you can wear a thin layer

Rib physeal closure (when the bone stops growing) occurs in women/AFAB people happens between ages 18 and 25

We recommend not binding before you are fully grown and to keep this fact in mind if you are under 18. It would be best for younger people to bind for shorter periods and to measure themselves regularly keeping in mind that they are growing and may change size without realising

underneath to stop the binder from rubbing.

Body Changes

You may gain or lose weight over time and not realise, especially if you are on testosterone. Jack (our founder) went from size S to size XL within a year after starting HRT. It is important to measure yourself regularly to check that your binder still fits.

If you experience chest pain, shoulder pain, back pain, abdominal pain, lightheadedness, heartburn or shortness of breath, stop wearing the binder immediately. Speak with your doctor and make sure you are accurately sized in your binder. Email us, we dont mind!

Remember to take care of your body even if you are struggling with your feelings about it. Dysphoria can make people feel very low and self destructive, especially with long waiting times for treatments, and feeling like you can't be yourself.

Talk to someone you can trust if you are feeling like this, it helps to not struggle alone and maybe they can help you.

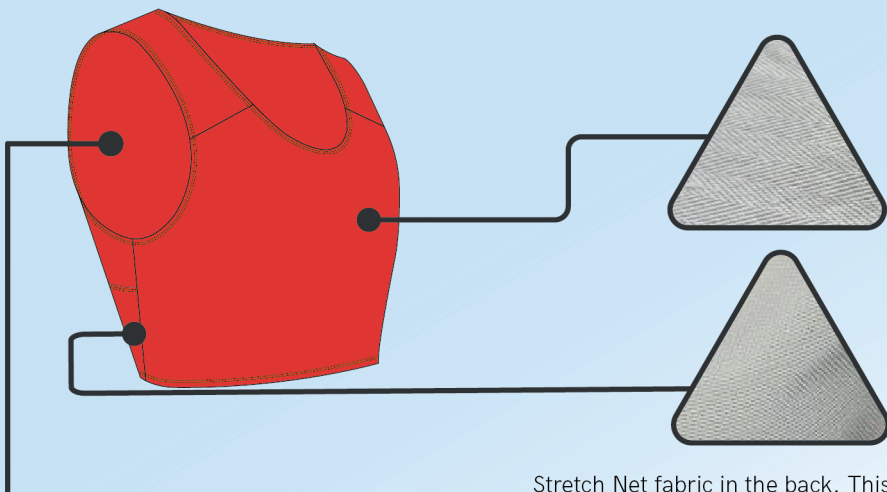
IF YOU HAVE A MEDICAL CONDITION SUCH AS ASTHMA CONSULT A DOCTOR BEFORE BINDING

WHAT'S A Spectrum Outfitters BINDER MADE FROM?



Recycled plastic

The main fabric (the coloured part) is made from a fabric derived from recycled plastic fishing nets that have been pulled from the oceans. Dumped fishing equipment is the biggest polluter of our oceans next to land based plastic litter.



The main fabric is a performance sports fabric designed for athletics and swimming. For this reason, the binders are fine to wear in a pool or the sea. It will also feel more breathable, and sweat will dry faster.

NEVER put a wet binder on or put a binder on wet skin. It may get stuck and can pull your skin.



INSIDE FRONT



INSIDE BACK

100% Cotton lining in the front. This material is very strong and is used to make corsets. This holds its shape while the rest of the binder pulls it flat over your chest. It can be a little rough when you first get it, but should soften over time. Wear a vest or t-shirt underneath to protect sensitive skin from chafing.

Stretch Net fabric in the back. This is what pulls the binder tight to your body. We have used this fabric to make it more breathable so that you don't overheat, while also providing superior compression.

These binders are unlike other binders in that the compression comes from one side, as opposed to all the way around. We believe this reduces the pressure and makes you feel more comfortable and freer to move than other brands.

Washing instructions

Please wash and dry these binders at cool temperatures. Washing any hotter than 40 degrees, tumble drying your binder or drying your binder on a radiator may cause your binder to lose its shape.

You can use fabric softener to help if your binder feels stiff or scratchy when it is new.

Latex allergies

Stretchy Fabrics contain elastane which is latex. If you have any allergies please keep this in mind and take precautions such as wearing a t-shirt underneath and consulting your doctor.

Washing and Caring for Your Binder



Trying on your binder



When you first try on your binder the fabric will feel stiff, and it might be a little tricky to put on. Binders are obviously supposed to be tight, so we recommend trying it on with a t-shirt or thin layer underneath incase you would like to return it and don't want to get marks on it from your skin.

Firstly, put one arm through an arm hole and pull the binder up to your shoulder.
Then put your head in.
Then your other arm.
Then you can pull/roll the binder down over your chest.

If you have a larger chest, you may want to gently move your chest under the binder down and outwards on each side, pushing them towards your underarm. This allows the binder to sit flatter in the middle.

Our binders don't feel as tight as other brands, so people may think they need a smaller size. Try looking at yourself from the side in a mirror with a t-shirt over the top. It is possible that you are a similar shape as you would have been in a tighter feeling binder and don't need to size down. Enjoy the space!