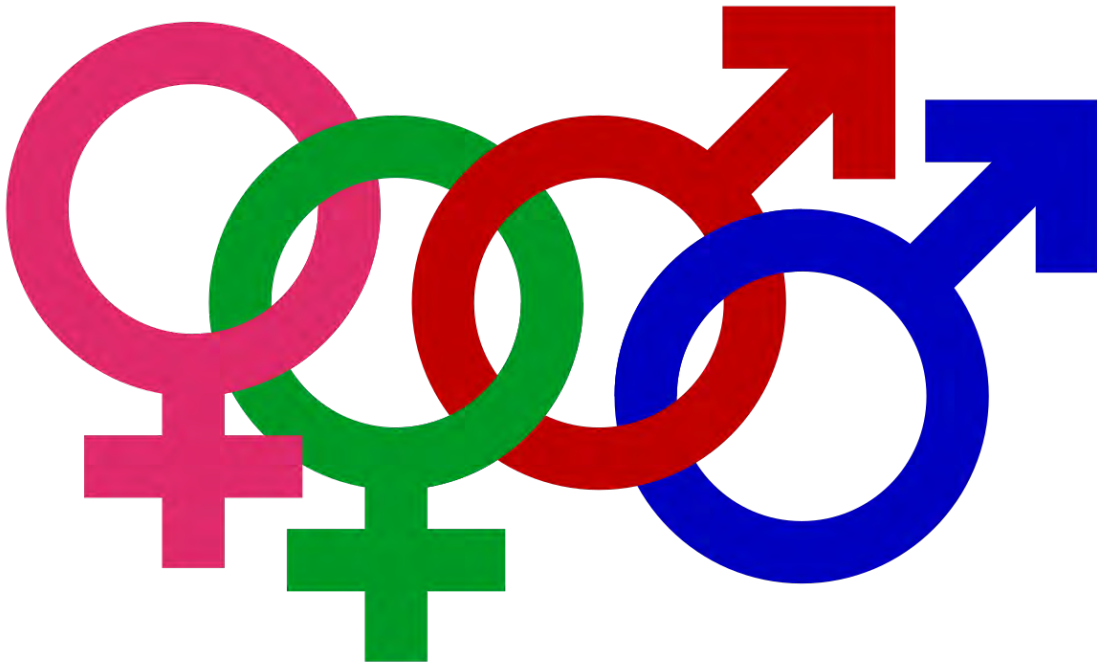


## LGBTQIA2S+ Letters: Queer/Questioning



The "Q" in LGBTQIA2S+ can stand for both "queer" and "questioning." The queer identity is an umbrella term used by people who do not wish to specify gender and/or sexual identities. Some people choose to identify as queer because they do not feel like any gender or sexuality labels accurately describe their own gender or attraction. The word queer does have a contentious history - it historically was used as a slur for LGBTQIA2S+ people until about the 1980s, when activist groups began to reclaim its use. Given this, some people choose not to use this identifier or still consider it to be a slur. However, it is fairly widely accepted to be a word that has been reclaimed.

People who are questioning either their gender or sexuality have a place in the LGBTQIA2S+ community, as well. It is essential to acknowledge the validity of people who think they may be queer or do not feel comfortable settling on any specific identity but know they are part of this community.

## LGBTQIA2S+ Letters: Intersex



Intersex people are those who are born with chromosomal, reproductive, or sexual anatomy that does not fit the typical definition of male or female sex. For example, someone may have external anatomy that appears typically female while having internal male anatomy, have a larger-than-normal clitoris or smaller-than-normal penis, or have "mosaic genetics" (some cells XX and some XY). The categorization of intersex is somewhat socially constructed, however, as it represents normal biological variance. It is estimated that intersex people make up about 1% of the population - the same percentage as redheads! Despite this, intersex people are usually viewed as having an "abnormality" and are assigned male or female at birth, despite not fitting the technical categories of binary sex. This can result in surgical "correction" of infants to make their genitalia look more "normal."

While many intersex people may be cisgender and heterosexual, they are included under the LGBTQIA2S+ umbrella because of the overlap they share with queer people of experienced harm due to societal sex and gender norms. However, intersex people can, of course, be part of the queer community. They are not inherently transgender but, because of the sex assigned to them at birth, may choose to engage in aspects of medical transition if they feel that their gender does not align with this sex.

## LGBTQIA2S+ Letters: Asexual/Aromantic Spectrum

### Asexual Flag



Asexuality is an umbrella term for people with little to no desire for sexual and/or romantic relationships. Often referred to as the "ace" umbrella, people under the asexuality spectrum may include:

- Demisexuality:** People who can only experience sexual attraction after forming a strong emotional connection
- Graysexuality:** People who are somewhere between asexuality and typical sexual attraction, which is called allosexuality.
- Aromantic:** People who do not experience romantic attraction but may experience sexual attraction
- Homo/Hetero/Bi/Pan-Romantic:** People who identify as asexual may still experience romantic attraction to one or multiple genders and use one of these identifiers (e.g., someone may be asexual but bi-romantic, meaning they experience romantic attraction to 2+ genders).

Asexual people may have one or multiple partners, as allosexual people typically do. However, the intimacy aspects of their relationship(s) may look slightly different. Rather than sex as a means of intimate connection, asexual folks may foster closeness with partners by engaging in other kinds of physical intimacy or non-physical intimacy (e.g., emotionally or spiritually intimate activities). Some asexual people do enjoy sex - their desire may not occur at the same rate as others.

## Two-Spirit (2S)



Two-spirit (2S) is an alternative gender status explicitly reserved for Native American/American Indian people. It is an umbrella term to describe Indigenous people who embody aspects of feminine and masculine energy. Traditionally, 2S people have held a number of important social and spiritual roles in their tribes and were often shamans and/or spiritual leaders. However, colonization led to homophobia and a binary understanding of gender that has led to prejudice and the erasure of two-spirit people. Not all Native people might use the term 2S: It was coined by Elder Myra Laramie in 1990 to unite the various queer identities and expressions among Native people. However, different tribes may have their own terms and understanding of 2S identities and may not use this umbrella term. As 2S Cherokee musician Tony Enos said, "If the morning is male and the evening is female, then Two-Spirits is dusk. We were then, and are still, the balance-keepers in our living Indigenous cultures."

## Pronouns, Neopronouns, and Multiple Pronoun Use



We are likely all familiar with the use of pronouns - we use them daily to refer to ourselves and others (e.g., she, us, they). Sharing your pronouns and using correct pronouns for others is an easy way to practice allyship and gender-affirming care. There are straightforward ways that you can integrate this into your clinical practice and daily life outside of clinical spaces:

- Wear a pronoun pin.
- Include your pronouns in your email signature and Zoom name.
- Ask patients for their pronouns (verbally or on intake forms).
- Use a neutral "they" for someone until you are able to learn what pronouns they use.

You may come across people who use multiple sets of pronouns (e.g., he/him and they/them). Typically, these are used interchangeably, and it is ideal to use both when referencing this person. For example, "They work primarily with adults, but I think he has experience with adolescents, too." If you are unsure, you can always ask someone how they prefer their pronouns to be used!

Rather than the typical she, they, and he pronouns, some people choose instead to use neopronouns. Neopronouns are often used to serve as a pronoun without expressing gender - some common ones include ze/zir, fae/faer, or it/its. While "they" might seem like it encompasses a lack of gender, some people do not feel that this accurately expresses their agender/genderfluid status because of the way that non-binary is sometimes socially conceptualized as a "third gender."

## History of the First Pride Event



In memory of the Stonewall uprising, which began on June 28, 1969, June is Pride Month. The Gay Pride Liberation March was held in Manhattan in 1970 to mark Stonewall's first anniversary. At the Stonewall Inn, a small dive bar in New York City, a riot over police brutality marked the beginning of Pride month. At the time, there were antiquated "cross-dressing" or "masquerade" rules that mandated a "man" or "woman" wear a specific number of outfits that corresponded to the gender on their state-issued ID. The police used these laws to conduct raids on bars and detain transgender and gender non-conforming people. On June 28, 1969, just after midnight, the police conducted a raid at the Stonewall Inn, as they frequently did. But this time, something different occurred: customers at Stonewall retaliated.

The first Pride march occurred in New York City on June 28, 1970. Organizers of the Christopher Street Liberation Day March, which commemorated the first anniversary of the Stonewall revolt, included Craig Rodwell, Fred Sargeant, Ellen Broidy, Linda Rhodes, and Brenda Howard. There were only a few thousand marchers, and the path spanned around 50 blocks. Despite the modest turnout, that year's Pride marches in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles inspired hundreds of parades. It took 30 years for Pride Month to be declared a national holiday in a proclamation issued by then-President Bill Clinton in 1999.

## Alok Vaid-Menon



They/Them

Alok is a transfeminine gender non-conforming person who uses mixed-media art, including poetry, performance, lecture, fashion design, and self-portraiture, to explore themes of gender, race, trauma, and belonging. They are the child of immigrant parents from Malaysia and India and speaks openly about being bullied as a child for both their race and gender expression. Their contemporary artistry and activism respond to violence against trans and gender non-conforming people, and they advocate for bodily diversity, gender neutrality, and self-determination as a means of freedom from gender norms. Alok has several publications, including the recent *Your Wound/My Garden* (2021) and *Beyond the Gender Binary* (2020). They also engage in regular speaking engagements with common themes, including how gender norms stem from racism and other harmful systems, neutralizing gendered ideas around clothing and body hair, and a breakdown of how they respond to anti-trans commentary.