

FTM Surgery in Gent, Belgium



*UZ= Universitair Ziekenhuis
(University hospital)*

Two Key Points:

- Apply as soon as possible to have a consultation (after consultation you are then put on the waiting list)
- To be approved for lower (genital) surgery in Belgium you need to have been on hormone therapy for a minimum of two years.

First things first:

If you want or are seriously considering lower surgery in Belgium, you should arrange an appointment for a consultation as soon as possible.

This is because there is a long waiting list of approximately 2 to 3 years and this is after the consultation. (You won't get on the waiting list until you've had the consultation)

Currently the waiting time alone to obtain the consultation is approximately 5-7 months.

I just thought I should mention this long waiting time, (because the Belgian Gender team is immensely popular and FTMS from all over Europe, North America and elsewhere go there for their surgery)

Contact: jan.smeyers@uzgent.be to arrange an appointment

I should emphasise is that the waiting list in Belgium is this long purely for phalloplasty or metoidoplasty (referred to here-after as meta) For Chest surgery and Hysterectomy (referred to here-after as hysto) the waiting list is nowhere near as long and can be as short as 4 months, although obtaining the actual consultation still takes a long time. (as mentioned 5 to 7 months)

Costs:

Hysto and chest (periareolar method) combined, is approximately 7000 Euros
phalloplasty currently April 07 prices: 30 000 euros.

Erectile prostheses(AMS 2 piece equipment): 14 000 Euros This operation is usually carried out a year later. This is the equipment currently favoured by the Belgian team:

http://www.americanmedicals.com/mens_erecile_products_objectname_male_ambicor.html

In order to have the surgery, you need to be approved by the Belgian Psychiatric team. (Usually just one person) You may need to see this person more than once. The approval however is relatively straightforward.

For Belgium, You must have been on hormone therapy for at least two years before any lower (genital) surgery can take place. However this doesn't apply to chest or hysto surgery. Belgium traditionally do the hysto and the chest op at the same time.

So in order to get on the waiting list for phalloplasty or metoidoplasty, you need to have the initial consultation with the Surgical team (If phallo/Meta: usually the urologist: Prof. Hoebeke and the Plastic surgeon: Prof Monstrey) and be approved by the resident gender psychiatrist. (Usually Dr De Cuyper)

For Hystos and chest ops you would need to see Dr Steven Weyers and Prof Monstrey.

The cost is around 40 Euros per consult with a surgeon and about 110 Euros per consult with the psychiatrist.

I recommend that you join the following Yahoo lower surgery groups to assist with your choice:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ftmphalloplastyinfo/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FTM-pre-Phallo/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FTMmetoidioplasty/>

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/The_Centurion_FTM_Surgery_Site/

Also look on transster for pics of surgical results:

<http://www.transster.com/>

Belgium isn't suited to everyone. They are very clear for example that you would have to have a hysto* prior to the meta or phallo op and a vaginectomy is standard. I envisage that it would be impossible to request that the vagina is kept in place.

In Belgium all the major operations (Phalloplasty, urethralplasty, scrotoplasty and vaginectomy) are carried out in one stage. Some people prefer this. Others prefer

to do it in stages. Interestingly I have discovered that the surgeons who do it in stages state that it's better on the body and the surgeons who do the ops in one go state the opposite. Personally I decided that I wanted to limit the number of General Anaesthetics that I would have to take.

Also Belgium mostly do the forearm phallo, rather than the abdominal. However Belgium are also experimenting with using a flap from the thigh. There are many research reports published by Belgium.

A recent one on sexual sensitivity:

Annals of Plastic Surgery. 58(4):427-433, April 2007.
(put this in Google to obtain abstract of report)

In more detail:

The Belgian team, with regard to the forearm phallo, do not replace the tissue from the arm with a full thickness graft, they take a partial thickness graft from the thigh. (this means that the skin on the thigh grows back with very little visible reminder of the graft)

They also sculpt the end to give a glans appearance.

At present the Erectile prostheses op costs about 14 000 Euros and is carried out about a year after the phallo op, dependent on when full sensation returns. (at this operation stage the testicles are completed with silicone implants)

Hospital stays are approximately 2.5 weeks for the phallo op and 5 days for the erectile prostheses op.

* You will also need to stay in a nearby B&B for 1 1/2 weeks after leaving the hospital.

Best of Luck!

* Belgium= the Belgian Gender Team in UZ,Gent, Belgium.

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