



Body Sovereignty

Body Sovereignty is about respecting, honouring and reclaiming your whole self.

Bodily autonomy means having control over my own body, making choices with respect, and is important for equality and human rights.

Body sovereignty is when your autonomy has been taken from you and you must take steps to reclaim it.

In Métis culture, sexuality is deeply intertwined with who we are as a people, how we relate to each other, the waters and the land, and the teachings we carry. Our sexual health, our relationships, and how we care for our bodies are influenced by our culture, stories, and beliefs. We acknowledge the strength of Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ kin, who have long carried the wisdom of navigating the traditional ways and the challenges imposed by colonialism.



You Have Autonomy of Your Body
As Métis people, we know the value of autonomy—our right to choose what's best for ourselves based on our own knowledge and experience.

You have the right to say no and the right to speak up for what you need, especially if you're being denied access to it.

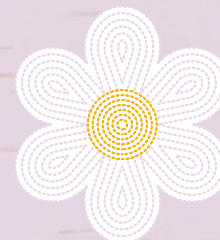
Never forget that your voice matters in every decision about your health.

Disclaimer: These worksheets are for educational purposes only. For medical advice, consult a trusted healthcare provider who respects your cultural values and needs.

Healthcare Providers: You Can Support Métis People

Prioritizing body sovereignty in healthcare means offering healthcare that is inclusive, respectful, and culturally sensitive. For Métis individuals, health providers can support their well-being by:

- * Understanding Métis history and culture, including the ongoing impacts of colonialism.
- * Acknowledging past injustices faced by Métis communities in accessing healthcare.
- * Incorporating cultural safety into all aspects of care.
- * Ensuring that informed consent is always prioritized.



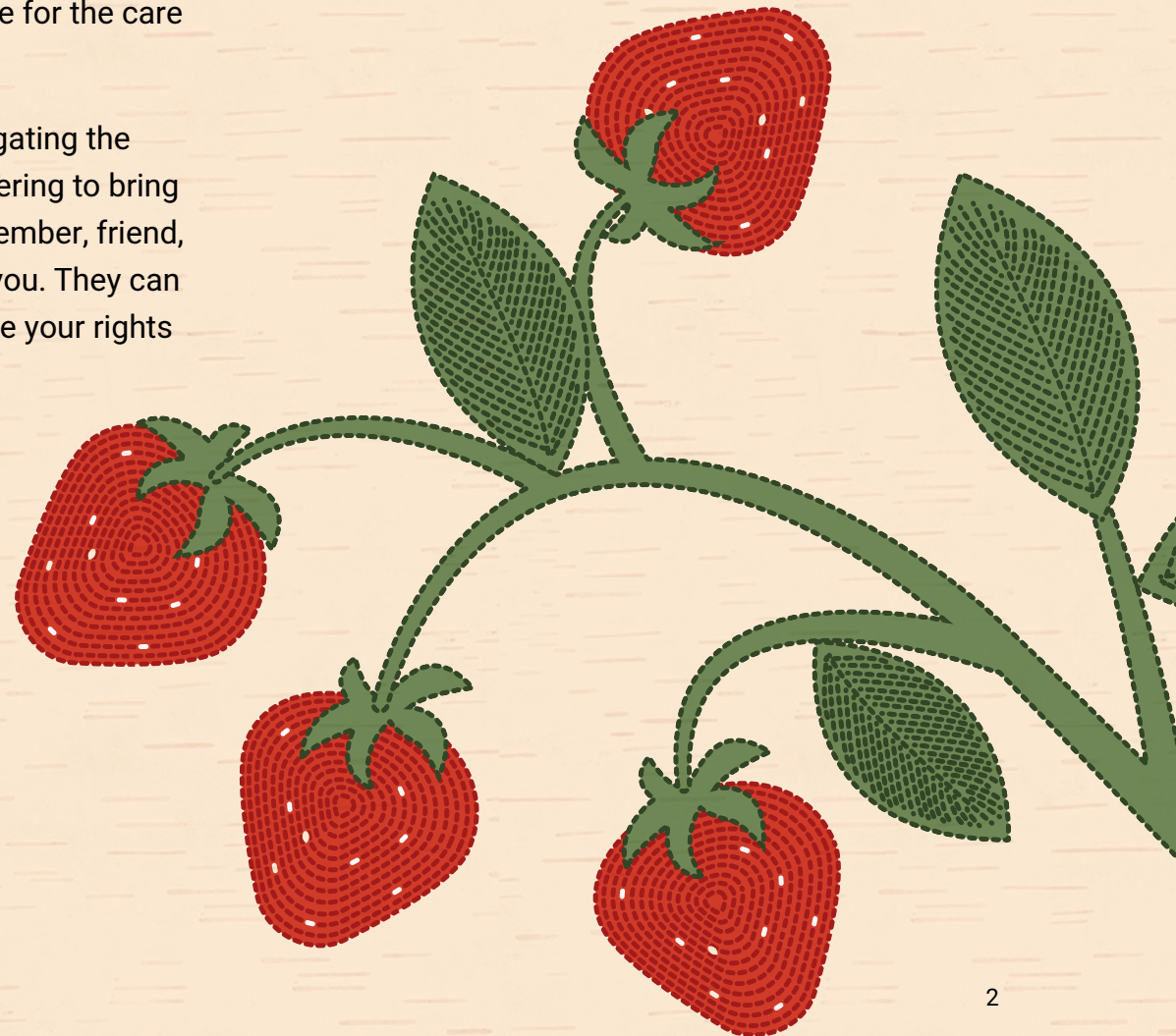
Claiming Body Sovereignty in Healthcare Settings

Know Your Health Rights: As Métis people, we carry the responsibility of protecting our bodies and health, not just for ourselves but for future generations. We have the right to make informed decisions about our health, weaving both traditional teachings and contemporary, western, healthcare practices.

Understand Your Options: When it comes to your sexual and reproductive health, it's important to choose what feels right for you. This includes everything from family planning to contraception, pregnancy care, fertility treatments and menopause management. Our ancestors passed down the teachings on how to care for the land, body, and spirits, and it's up to us to use that wisdom alongside contemporary choices.

Speak Up About Your Needs: Whether you are seeking hormone therapy, contraception, pregnancy support, or any other health services, don't be afraid to advocate for yourself. If you feel unheard or uncomfortable, speak up. Your voice matters, and your health needs are valid. Advocate for the care you deserve.

Bring a Support System: When navigating the healthcare system, it can be empowering to bring someone you trust—be it a family member, friend, or community member—to support you. They can help you voice your needs and ensure your rights are respected.



Seek Culturally Safe Care: As Métis people, we deserve healthcare that honours who we are. Remember, everyone is entitled to healthcare that reflects their culture and values.

Regular Check-ups are an Important Part of Our Health: Taking care of your health is a responsibility. Regular check-ups and screenings, such as HPV tests and STI screenings, are important tools in maintaining good health. They're about honouring the body and ensuring that you are equipped with the knowledge to make decisions for your well-being.

Set Healthy Boundaries: As a Métis person, setting boundaries—both physical and emotional—is part of your inherent right to protect your body. Boundaries are not just about saying “no”; they're about respecting your needs, in healthcare, relationships, and your daily life. Be clear about your physical, emotional and mental boundaries with others. This includes personal space, intimacy, and physical contact.

Prioritize Consent: Consent is key to building respectful relationships. It is central to Métis values of mutual respect and community well-being. In all sexual relationships and healthcare decisions, it is essential to have clear and informed consent. You can say “yes” or “no” and change your mind anytime. Consent is key to ensuring that your healthcare experiences are respectful and safe.

Support Access to Healthcare: To help improve health outcomes for Métis communities, we need policies that make sexual and reproductive health services available to everyone. This means better access to care for Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals. By advocating for these services, we can help to ensure that everyone in our communities has the information and support they need to make informed and empowered decisions about their health.



Before undergoing any procedure or treatment, ask questions until you feel comfortable with your decision, and never hesitate to say no if something feels wrong.



Sharing Our Stories Makes Us All Stronger

Sharing our experiences—whether about Moon Time, plant medicines, or throughout our stages of life—empowers us and strengthens our communities. Storytelling is medicine, and by passing down our knowledge, we ensure that future generations will be empowered to make informed, healthy decisions for themselves.

**Embrace your health. Celebrate your identity.
Empower yourself and your community.**

Your Body is Sovereign

Being Métis is about strength and resilience. Challenge conventional body standards. Reject societal pressure. Embrace your Métis identity with pride and take ownership of your body in ways that reflect your unique journey.

As Métis people, we are resilient. Our strength comes from generations of overcoming challenges and embracing our identities. It's time to take pride in our health, celebrate our Métis culture, and continue to share our stories. By doing so, we reclaim the power to make informed choices about our lives and healing journeys.

Body sovereignty reminds us that everyone is valuable and deserving of respect. Own your Métis identity and resist societal pressure to conform to body standards. Challenge body norms. Be proud of who you are. Express your authentic self in a way that feels genuine to you.

Our bodies are sovereign. They belong to us, and we have the right to care for them in ways that are true to our culture, our values, and our unique experiences. Together, we can heal, advocate for our needs, and create a future where our health is honored, respected, and supported by the systems around us.



“The strawberry represents women and it has been known as the heart berry. Decisions that are guided by the heart.”

LFMO Grandmother Linda Boudreau-Semaganis

