

Benefits of Circumcision

- Reduces by approximately 3-fold the risk of getting HIV (AIDS), during sex with an infected woman. In developed countries such as Australia, cases of HIV acquired heterosexually are rising. Although still low, his risk, especially if uncircumcised, will be much greater if he engages in unsafe sex with people in countries in which HIV abounds.
- Credible research shows that most women prefer the appearance of the circumcised penis. They also prefer it for sexual activity. Hygiene is one reason; increased contact of the penis with the vaginal wall, and thus greater stimulation, are others.

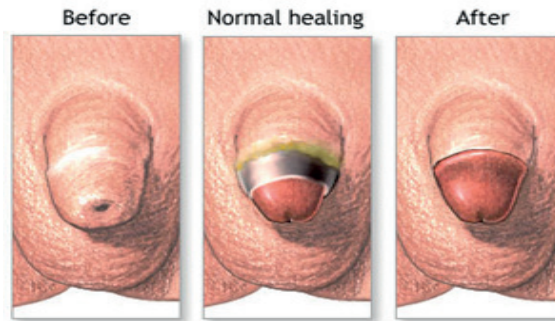
Contraindications

- Certain genital structure abnormalities, such as a misplaced urethral opening (as hypospadias and epispadias), curvature of the head of the penis (chordee), or ambiguous genitalia, because the foreskin may be needed for reconstructive surgery.
- Premature infants and those who are not clinically stable and in good health.
- Family history of serious bleeding disorders (hemophilia), it is recommended that the blood be checked for normal coagulation properties before the procedure is attempted

Procedure

At birth, most boys have a sleeve of skin covering the end of the penis. This protective sleeve is called the Foreskin. During a circumcision, this sleeve of skin is cut away, exposing the glans (head) of the penis.

Circumcision is sometimes done a few days after birth under local anaesthetic or with no anaesthetic. Alternatively, it can be done at several months of age in hospital with local or general anaesthetic, or even later in life.



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Complications

- 1 in 500 circumcisions there may be either a little bleeding – easily stopped by pressure or, less commonly, requiring stitches (1 in 1000).
- The need to repeat surgery (1 in 1000)
- A generalised infection that will require antibiotics (1 in 4000). Although there can be a local infection, often what seems like a local infection is actually part of the normal healing process.
- Serious complications (requiring hospitalisation) are rare – approximately 1 in 5000.
- Mutilation or loss of the penis, and death, are virtually unheard of with circumcisions performed by a competent medical practitioner.

Circumcision

Circumcision is a surgical operation that removes some skin or tissue from the genitals of a boy. Circumcision is a simple procedure that removes the foreskin- a sleeve of skin covering the tip of the penis. Parents have the legal right to authorise circumcision.

In order to make an informed decision, they must carefully consider the benefits and risks.

Since the foreskin traps bacteria and other infectious agents, as well as accumulating malodorous smegma, its removal improves genital hygiene and reduces risk of diseases and other conditions over the lifetime for the boy and his future sexual life and partners

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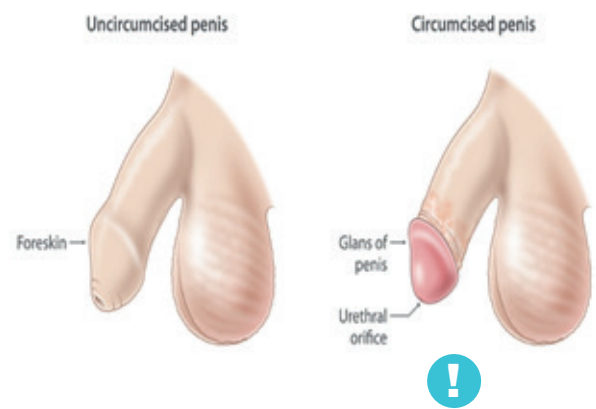


- Questions to ask when deciding about circumcision**
1. What are the possible health benefits of circumcision?
 2. What are the possible health risks of circumcision?
 3. How is circumcision performed and what is the recovery?
 4. What is the care for an uncircumcised penis?
 5. What are my religious and cultural beliefs about circumcision?
 6. What are social reasons to consider?
 7. What are my personal preferences and feelings?
 8. What is in the best interest of my son?

If a boy is circumcised

After the circumcision scar has healed, the glans will be permanently exposed. The appearance of the penis will depend on how much skin has been removed and where the cuts into the foreskin have been made.

You and your son don't need to do anything special to care for an circumcised penis.



Things can go wrong with circumcisions, even when an experienced doctor does the operation.

Benefits of Circumcision

- Sexual function, sensation and satisfaction are the same or better in circumcised men.

If a boy is uncircumcised

At birth, the foreskin is joined to the underlying glans of the penis, so the foreskin can't be pulled back. During childhood, the foreskin continues to cover and protect the sensitive glans.

At some time during childhood for most boys, the foreskin separates from the glans and can be pulled back to expose the glans.

Once your son can easily pull back his foreskin, he can wash underneath it while in the bath or shower. Generally, the foreskin is designed to look after itself. You and your son don't need to do anything special to care for an uncircumcised penis.

- Eliminates the risk of phimosis, which affects 1 in 10 older boys and men. This condition refers to a tight foreskin that cannot be pulled back fully, so making cleaning under it, and passing urine, difficult. Phimosis increases risk of penile cancer 12-fold, and is a cause of catheter problems in nursing homes.
- Reduces by 3-fold the risk of inflammation and infection of the skin of the penis.
- Over 10-fold decrease in risk of urinary tract infection. Whereas risk is only 1 in 500 for a circumcised boy, 1 in 50 uncircumcised males will get a urinary tract infection in infancy and 1 in 3 over their lifetime. 40% develop kidney inflammation and disease; sepsis and meningitis can also result.
- Over 20-fold decrease in risk of invasive penile cancer, which has a high fatality rate. One in 1,000 uncircumcised men get penile cancer, which usually requires penile amputation or disfiguring surgery leading to impaired penile function.
- Uncircumcised men have elevated risk of prostate cancer, which affects 1 in 9 Australian men over their lifetime.
- Circumcision may reduce by up to 5 times the risk of the man's female partner being infected by chlamydia or getting cervical cancer.
- If not circumcised soon after birth, up to 10% of males will later require one anyway for medical reasons.
- Circumcision halves the risk of thrush as well as sexually transmitted infections such as high-risk papilloma (wart) virus, syphilis, trichomonas, chancroid, mycoplasma and reduces genital herpes risk by one-third.