

Newborn Circumcision



CIRCUMCISION: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE A DECISION

Origins: Circumcision dates back many decades and has been performed as a ritual to God in many religions. It later became used in medical practice as a way to make it easier to keep the penis clean. The 3 main religions that practice circumcision are: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

Surprisingly Islam is the largest religious group to perform circumcision. There is no fixed age that it can be performed in Islam but the preferred age is 7. In Judaism circumcision is performed on the 8th day of life in a ceremony where a mohel performs the circumcision. And in Christianity it is performed soon after birth (within 2 days). This is the norm for the rest of society. It is also a cultural tradition in many countries representing coming of age (Philippines) or better hygiene (Korea)

Circumcision is the practice of cutting the prepuce or foreskin from the tip of the penis. There are different ways to perform the procedure which comes with risks and benefits. Current recommendations by the AAP* and ACOG* are circumcision be performed when there is a medical necessity. They do not recommend routine circumcision. The procedure should not be performed on premature or compromised infants or infants with genitourinary defects.



Mountain Heart Midwifery



*American Academy of Pediatrics

*American College of Obstetrics



RISKS

The following are risks associated with circumcision

- Bleeding in excess
- Infection (redness that does not go away, swelling, or fluid that looks cloudy and forms a crust)
- Insufficient foreskin removed
- Excess foreskin removed
- Adhesions/skin bridges
- Abnormal healing
- Meatitis (Inflammation of the opening of the penis)
- Meatal stenosis (Narrowing of the urethral opening)

Call the Dr right away if you notice any of the above symptoms.



CARE FOR THE CIRCUMCISED PENIS

If you have decided to circumcise your child here are a few tips to help with the care of the penis:

- With each diaper change be sure to clean the tip of the penis with mild soap.
- Before diapering put petroleum jelly on the tip of the penis over the wound.
- Change diapers often.
- It usually takes 7-10 days for the skin to heal.



BENEFITS

It has been shown that circumcision leads to the following benefits:

- Less risk of urinary tract infections
- A reduced risk of some sexually transmitted diseases in men
- Protection against penile cancer and a lower risk of cervical cancer in female sex partners
- Prevention of balanitis (inflammation of the glans) and balanoposthitis (inflammation of the glans and foreskin)
- Prevention of phimosis (the inability to retract the foreskin) and paraphimosis (the inability to return the foreskin to its original location)



CARE FOR THE UNCIRCUMCISED PENIS

If you have decided to leave your baby intact here are a few tips to care for the penis:

- Leave it alone
- External washing and rinsing of the penis daily
- DO NOT RETRACT to clean (the foreskin is attached to the glands and retracting can cause issues)
- Smegma (dead skin cells that have sluffed off) is normal, clean off as needed.
- It may take up to 5 years for retraction of the foreskin to happen. Teach your child how to retract and clean under the skin as he grows.

