

## Reasons Why Parents Choose Not to Circumcise:

- Possible risks from having a surgical procedure. Complications are rare and usually minor. They include bleeding, infection, cutting the foreskin too short or too long, and poor healing.
- The belief that the foreskin is there to protect the end of the penis.
- The belief that circumcision makes the end of the penis less sensitive, however this has not been proven.
- The desire to keep the child's body intact as it was born.

## Care of the Uncircumcised Penis:

Washing your baby's penis and foreskin carefully is important. The outside should be washed with soap and water – do not attempt to pull the foreskin back. The foreskin usually does not completely retract for several years and should never be forced. You do not need to use cotton swabs or antiseptics to keep the area clean. Once the foreskin begins to retract, you can teach your son to gently pull it back, wash and rinse with soap and warm water, and then pull the foreskin back over the end of the penis.



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***The  
Facts About  
Circumcision***



## What Is Circumcision?

Circumcision is an elective surgical procedure in which the skin covering the end of the penis is removed. The procedure is usually performed in the first days of life by a physician. Studies have shown some medical benefits, but the benefits are not significant enough to recommend that all boy babies be circumcised. This procedure is not required – it is your choice whether or not to have it done. Circumcision is not recommended as a routine procedure by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

## How Is It Done?

The physician will use pain medication to reduce the discomfort and stress for your baby. The penis and foreskin are cleaned, and a special clamp is attached to the penis so the the foreskin can be removed. The procedure only takes a few minutes, and complications from the circumcision are rare. Ointment and gauze are often placed over the end of the penis after the procedure to protect it from rubbing on the diaper.

## Reasons Why Parents Choose to Circumcise:

- Religious or cultural beliefs or rituals.
- Personal choice because all of the males in their family are circumcised.
- A lower risk of urinary tract infections. A circumcised baby boy has about a 1 in 1,000 chance of getting a urinary tract infection the first year of life, whereas an uncircumcised baby boy has about a 1 in 100 chance.
- A lower risk of getting cancer of the penis. This kind of cancer is very rare in both circumcised and uncircumcised males.
- A lower risk of getting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and the AIDS virus.
- Prevents infections of the foreskin.
- Prevents phimosis, a condition in uncircumcised males that makes it impossible for the foreskin to be retracted.
- Easier to keep the genital area clean.

## Important Questions to Ask Your Doctor:

- Who will be performing the procedure?
- What kind of pain medication will be used?
- Are there any problems that could occur?

## Care of the Circumcised Penis:

The end of the penis may look red, raw or yellowish. Petroleum jelly should be used to keep the penis from sticking to the diaper. Your baby will be checked frequently to make sure that he can urinate normally in the first six to eight hours after the procedure. There may be a little yellow discharge or coating around the end of the penis, but this should not last longer than a week. The penis should be completely healed within seven to ten days after the procedure. Call your baby's doctor if there is consistent bleeding, redness around the end of the penis that gets worse after three to five days, or signs of infection such as swelling or foul-smelling drainage.

