Routine Newborn Male Circumcision: Pros and Cons

New Recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics
Neonatal Circumcision

- Usually performed <2 months old
- By Ob/Gyn or Pediatrician
- Complication rates: 0.2-0.6% minor bleeding, infection
- Local or topical anesthesia
Neonatal Circumcision
Standard Circumcision
Controversies

- Health benefits: STD prevention, Penile Cancer, UTI
- Religious beliefs: Jews, Muslims
- Emotional/Family issues: Father/son
- Sexuality: Increased or decreased sensitivity of penis/glans
- Moral issues: informed consent, age of consent
- Economic Issues: Should be paid for by health plans, medicaid
- Criminal Law issues: Assault, mutilation
American Academy of Pediatrics

1975 – No medical indication for circumcision, recommend against routine neonatal circumcision.

August 2012 – The preventative health benefits of routine infant circumcision clearly outweigh the risks.
Circumcision rates steadily dropping from a high of 62.7% in 1999 to 54.7% 2012.

Circumcision rates vary widely
A January study by UCLA shows circumcision rates are especially low in the West, which has larger groups of Hispanics and Asians, who tend not to be circumcised, and are relatively high in the Midwest. The study found that in the 16 states where Medicaid does not pay for circumcision — Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Oregon, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Utah and Washington — the circumcision rates were only half what they were in states where coverage was provided.

Overall rate: 56 percent

Source: UCLA, nationwide hospital inpatient survey, 2004
How many men are circumcised around the world?

- Nigeria: 95%
- Philippines: 90.5%
- US: 75.5%
- Australia: 60%
- South Korea: 60%
- South Africa: 36%
- Canada: 32%
- Uganda: 27%
- UK: 8.5%

Globally: 30%

Source: WHO
Paraphimosis
Phimosis
Balanitis
UTI

In the first year of life, incidence of UTI for circumcised males: 1 in 100,000

Incidence of UTI in uncircumcised males: 1 in 100

Clinical sidebar: Pyuria, hematuria on voided urine specimen does not necessarily mean presence of a clinical UTI particularly if asymptomatic or if patient has an indwelling catheter, stent, urinary stoma.
Penile Cancer

Incidence 1/100,000 in the US. As high as 10% in undeveloped countries.
Incidence close to zero in males circumcised as infants.
Figure 9.1. HIV prevalence among tested men 15-49 by male circumcision
According to AAP meta analysis, 50-60% lower risk of HIV in circumcised males. Also lower risk of transmission of HIV to sex partners in circumcised males.

HPV risk much lower in circumcised males and risk of transmission of HPV to female partners much less. Implications for cervical cancer risk in females.
We’re circumcised & proud of it!
Conclusion

Strong evidence that there are health benefits to newborn circumcision.

However, standard hygiene and safe sex practices could mitigate the differences.

Pain/Complications from neonatal circumcision are negligible.

Personal/family/parental/religious preferences should take precedence.

Neonatal circumcision should be a covered procedure.