
■ **NOCIRC OF MICHIGAN** ■

INFORMANT

EDUCATING A NEW GENERATION — FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ALL CHILDREN

VOLUME 3 — NUMBER 3 — APRIL 1999

The Medical Debate is Finished **Circumcision Loses Support**

The *American Academy of Pediatrics'* admission March 1st that circumcision is not recommended ends America's 130-year promotion of the painful procedure for baby boys. During those years, 60 different diseases were once claimed to be cured or prevented by circumcision.

The medical debate is over. Routine circumcision is not cleaner, it is not healthier, and it poses surgical risks to newborns. In fact, circumcision was never clinically proven to be effective before it was widely adopted. Such a widespread mistake is unprecedented in the history of modern medicine.

Today's parents have been misled by a long history of false health claims about circumcision. For years, many pediatricians told parents that their babies didn't feel pain. Even today, doctors fail to administer anesthesia in 75% of the cir-

cumcisions performed in the United States. However, no anesthesia completely eliminates the surgical and post-operative pain felt by baby boys.

This procedure is a money-maker for doctors and hospitals and is the only surgery performed on children without a diagnosis. It is an American cultural tradition that has, until now, been sold to uninformed parents as a medical benefit while clouded by the pressures of social conformity.

In fact, circumcision permanently injures baby boys and the men they will become. This injury should be self-evident: circumcision strips away and amputates specialized skin and mucous membrane that, in the adult male, would be a sleeve of flesh over 3 inches long and 1-1/2 inches in diameter. This tissue, over one-third of the skin of the penis,

performs protective and sexual functions for a man that are irreplaceable.

The legal liability of performing such surgery without a patient's consent likely means the twenty-first century will witness the end of routine circumcision in the United States.

Meanwhile, the Midwest still has the highest rate of non-religious and non-therapeutic circumcision in the entire world. In 1999, Michigan doctors will amputate normal, healthy and functioning tissue from 56,000 baby boys without their consent at a cost of \$14 million dollars. An estimated 42,000 baby boys will undergo the harmful procedure without any anesthesia. This surgery will permanently alter the appearance and function of their penis on the cultural preference of their parents.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The *American Academy of Pediatrics'* new policy statement demonstrates that it can neither lead, follow nor get out of the way when it comes to protecting baby boys. They have unwittingly exhausted any future possibility of recommending circumcision by playing their best hand and *still* declining to make a recommendation after four policy reviews in 28 years. The medical debate has been immobilized and is finished.

NOCIRC leads the world in promoting the human rights of children to the lifelong benefits of intact genitals. We look now to the arenas for our next triumphs: to the newborn nursery, for educating parents; to the bedroom, for promoting the sexual benefits of the male foreskin; and to the courts, for enforcing the human rights of children.

On behalf of all the children, thanks! *Norm Cohen, Director*

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Dear American Academy of Pediatrics: *Where is My Foreskin?*

by Norm Cohen

Dear American Academy of Pediatrics,

In response to your recent circumcision policy statement, there are a few facts I think you should know:

The male foreskin has three known functions: protective, sensory and sexual.

During infancy, the foreskin is attached to the glans penis and protects it from urine, feces and abrasion from diapers. Throughout life, the foreskin keeps the glans warm, soft and moist while protecting it from trauma and injury. Without this protection, the glans becomes dry, calloused and desensitized from exposure and chafing.

Circumcision permanently injures baby boys and the men they will become.

Circumcision creates a skin deficit on the penis. The flesh amputated from a baby would have become, in the adult, a sleeve of specialized skin and mucous membrane over 3 inches long and 1-1/2 inches in diameter. This tissue is over one-third of the skin of the penis.

Circumcision reduces the function and effectiveness of the penis during sexual intercourse.

As a result of this skin deficit, there is a reduction in sexual pleasure in every circumcised man.

During an erection, the entire foreskin is able to glide on the penile shaft, exposing the soft, erogenous tissues of the glans and the inner foreskin to direct and indirect stimulation. The foreskin stimulates the glans and the glans stimulates the foreskin. The foreskin's natural lubrication reduces friction during sexual activity.

Many men are angry because they have been denied the use of their foreskin. Non-surgical foreskin restoration is practiced today as an effective means of regaining lost function and sensitivity.

Many doctors demonstrate a pattern of negligence and incompetence about circumcision.

Circumcision was never clinically proven to be effective before it was widely adopted. It has been performed by American doctors since before the germ theory of disease.

For years, most doctors told parents that babies don't feel pain and would not remember their circumcision. Over the last ten years these medical fallacies have been repeatedly and decisively disproved by clinical research. However, there is a tremendous gap between evidence and practice. Doctors decline to administer anesthesia in over 75% of the circumcisions performed in the United States (*Pediatrics*, June 1998). No anesthesia completely eliminates the surgical and post-operative pain of circumcision.

Parents have consistently received little or no information from their doctors about the function of the foreskin, the pain and risks inherent in circumcision, and the resulting trauma prior to permitting the procedure. Many doctors have cited as scientific fact methodologically flawed studies and suppressed information that discouraged circumcision.

Routine circumcision is a non-therapeutic procedure.

Circumcision is a tradition in the United States but confused as a medical procedure and sold as a medical benefit. The "potential medical benefits" cited by the American Academy of Pediatrics are entirely speculative in nature. The cause-and-effect of these speculative benefits have never been proven or even precisely explained.

Circumcision was developed by cultures that considered sexuality in general, and the penis in particular, dirty and dangerous. A large number of American doctors experience the practice of circumcision as culturally and personally

appealing as well as economically rewarding.

Doctors who practice routine circumcision are violating the first maxim of their medical practice, "First, Do No Harm".

Over 96 million babies in the United States have been circumcised since 1900.

The physical trauma and psychological distress associated with circumcision violate a doctor's commitment to avoid doing harm. Circumcision disrupts the accepted norms inherent in the patient-physician relationship, such as informed consent, trust and the promotion of good health.

A boy's intact penis requires no special care whatsoever.

Many doctors who lack proper training have harmed boys by forcibly tearing back their foreskin while claiming the need to "examine" or "clean". They have consistently provided erroneous and dangerous advice to parents about the care of the intact penis while encouraging circumcisions.

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The Informant (ISSN 1092-020X) is published three times a year by **NOCIRC of Michigan**. It represents our commitment to provide educational information in this state and to activists everywhere. Articles, comments, and questions are welcome.

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This negligence and incompetence costs parents, health insurers and the government over \$500 million annually for circumcisions in the United States.

The rights of children to the flesh and function of their bodies is non-negotiable.

There are no "excess parts" on the human body. Human beings have an inherent and inalienable right to their entire, unmarked body and to the functions it provides. The removal of normal, healthy tissue from a child's genitals—in the name of medicine, religion or social custom—always results in a loss of sexual function and violates this right.

No study of infant circumcision can amend this most fundamental right. The foreskin of the male and female, and the clitoris and the labia of the female are all normal, functional human body parts.

All girls in the United States have been protected by Federal law from any unnecessary genital procedures since April, 1997. Indeed, the slightest cutting of a girl's genitals, for whatever reason, is a felony. Even the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a policy statement opposing all forms of female circumcision in July of 1998.

All children are entitled to equal protection, regardless of gender, race, religion, national origin or social custom. **NOCIRC** reaffirms this fundamental

human right without religious, cultural or racial prejudice.

Opposition to routine infant circumcision is the only moral stand that can be taken.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has issued four separate statements on circumcision in the past twenty-eight years. Each time the Academy has failed to address: 1.) the moral and ethical responsibility of doctors, 2.) the function of the male foreskin, 3.) the cultural and personal bias of pro-circumcision researchers who publish circumcision studies, and 4.) the financial incentives that encourage the practice.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has fallen short of its counterparts around the world who protect children from unnecessary genital procedures. Medical academies in Canada, Britain and Australia have recognized male circumcision as undesirable for the good health and well-being of infants and children.

NOCIRC leads the world in promoting the human rights of male and female children to the lifelong benefits of intact genitals. **NOCIRC's** task now is to educate a new, twenty-first century generation for the well-being of all children.

Norm Cohen is the director of NOCIRC of Michigan. He was forcibly circumcised when he was eight days old. He recently completed the restoration of his foreskin through non-surgical means.

MISSION STATEMENT
**NOCIRC OF
MICHIGAN**

NOCIRC of Michigan is a consumer rights advocacy group helping parents understand that circumcision is harmful to their children.

We educate mothers, fathers and health care providers in Michigan about the harm of circumcision and about proper intact care. We protect consumers from fraudulent medical claims. We actively promote the benefits of normal genitalia.

We know the removal of normal, healthy tissue from a child's genitals—in the name of medicine, religion or social custom—results in a loss of sexual function and is a violation of human rights.

We are a non-profit group consisting of health care professionals and dedicated lay people. We are committed to effective education, advocacy and activism on behalf of children to protect them from harm. We are part of a worldwide organization dedicated to ending all forms of male and female genital mutilation.

WEB WATCH

www.circumcision.org

This memorable web address from the **Circumcision Resource Center (CRC)** raises awareness and facilitates healing of the many traumas associated with circumcision. The web site is a valuable source of information for parents, Jews, childbirth educators, and medical and mental health care providers.

You can order excellent resource books like *Circumcision: The Hidden Trauma* and *Questioning Circumcision: A Jewish Perspective*, both written by Ronald Goldman, Ph.D., psychologist and executive director of the **CRC** in Boston.

Norm Cohen, Director, **NOCIRC of Michigan**, staffing the **NOCIRC** information booth last January at the **1999 Health, Fitness and Lifestyle Show** at the Novi Expo Center in Novi, Michigan.

Restore Yourself!

Announcing a Handy Kit for Circumcised Men

Why Restore Yourself?

Men, on the day you were born, or thereabouts, some doctor, without your permission, cut away part of your penis and threw it in the hospital trash can. The foreskin of your penis was intended to serve three functions: **protective, sensory, and sexual**. When it was amputated, all of these functions were lost. Most importantly, your experience of your penis as a sexual organ of sensory pleasure is now diminished.

As you age, the end of your penis (*glans*), which has been dry since the day of your circumcision, loses its sensitivity. Furthermore, during sexual activity the foreskin is meant to stimulate the glans while the glans stimulates the foreskin. Circumcision robbed you of this pleasure. Maybe it's time you got it back.

Discover the Joys of Un-Circumcising!

Thousands of men have successfully grown a sheath of skin that closely resembles the foreskin nature intended them to have. Foreskin restoration is safe, requires no surgery, no pain, very little cost, and produces **improved sexual sensitivity in 30 days**.

The **Restore Yourself!** kit provides you with excellent instructions and all the materials for foreskin restoration

using the "*T-Tape Technique*", which is widely regarded as the best and most popular method for restoration.

Does It Really Work?

Yes. Skin grows in response to the application of continuous tension. Generating this tension using the *T-Tape Technique* will gradually cause more skin to grow forward along the length of your penis, providing you with a new and permanent foreskin over time. Furthermore, when the head of your penis is covered continuously during the day, it is allowed to become softer and more sensitive.

How Long Will This Take?

Everyone who has gone through the restoration process reports a significant increase in the sensitivity of the glans of their penis. You will begin to feel this increased sensitivity *within 30 days* of the start of your restoration. It may take *three months* to detect the growth of new skin. Expect that a full restoration will take two to three years.

How to Order the Kit

All of the instructions and materials you need to restore are included in the kit. This includes special tape, clips, elastic straps, and an illustrated instruction guide.

Send a check or money order for **\$ 24.95** payable to: **NOCIRC of Michigan**, PO Box 333, Birmingham, MI 48012.

30-Day Money Back Guarantee !

WARNINGS: Foreskin restoration is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. This material is provided for your information only. It is not medical advice. Foreskin restoration is not a cure for any medical disease or sexual dysfunction like impotence or premature ejaculation. It is not a medical treatment. If you have any medical condition, symptom or dysfunction affecting or related to your genitals, or if you have any health questions or concerns, first consult a competent and caring doctor.

CALENDAR

NOCIRC of Michigan Exhibit Dates

Volunteers are needed to help staff the NOCIRC information booth at the exhibition listed below. Come and enjoy sharing our message with others!

Please call (248) 642-5703 to volunteer.

- ♦ **July 21st - 24th, 1999**
Ann Arbor Art Fair
Liberty Street
Ann Arbor, MI
9:00 am to 9:00 pm

BAD IDEAS FROM THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

Real Quotes from Real Doctors

"Frequently children will get into the habit of playing with or pulling at the genitals. Such children—both boys and girls—may be in need of a thorough examination by a competent physician. Not unlikely circumcision or other special corrective measure is needed."

Dr. Morris Fishbein, M.D., editor
Modern Home Medical Adviser, p. 90
1969, Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York

TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT CIRCUMCISION

Become An Informant

A *tax-deductible* membership fee of \$25 or more makes you a NOCIRC of Michigan **Informant**. Help us to educate parents!

PO Box 333, Birmingham, MI 48012

NAME:

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