

CIRCUMCISION

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Circumcision is the surgical removal of the foreskin, the skin that covers the tip of the penis. It is usually done before the baby goes home from the hospital. A baby must be stable and healthy to be circumcised. Though commonly performed in the United States, circumcision is not a required medical procedure. The American Academy of Pediatrics considers circumcision a choice for parents to make based on the possible benefits and risks of the surgery, as well as their own religious, cultural, and personal preferences. Not all insurance companies pay for the procedure. If you plan to circumcise your son, you should contact your insurance provider for information about coverage.

BENEFITS:

- A slightly lower risk of urinary tract infections (UTIs). In the first year of life, a circumcised boy has about one in 1,000 chance of getting a UTI. A baby who is not circumcised has a one in 100 chance of getting a UTI in the first year of life.
- A lower risk of cancer of the penis. Penile cancer is very rare in both men who are or are not circumcised. In addition, cervical cancer is less common in the female sexual partners of circumcised men.
- A possible lower risk of sexually transmitted infections. Practicing safe sex, along with using a condom, is the best protection against sexually transmitted infections, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- Prevention of foreskin infections and phimosis, a condition in which it is very difficult to pull back the foreskin. In uncircumcised boys, use of proper hygiene can help lower the chance of getting infections, cancer of the penis, and sexually transmitted infections.

RISKS:

- Your baby may feel some pain during the procedure. You can ask that a numbing medicine be put on your baby's penis to lessen the pain.
- A low risk of bleeding, infection, and injury to the penis or urethra.
- When the foreskin is removed, the tip of the penis may become less sensitive to touch and irritated. This could cause the opening of the penis to become smaller making it difficult to urinate which may need to be corrected surgically.
- These risks are higher when circumcision is performed on older babies, boys, and men.

MEDICAL CARE & TREATMENT OPTIONS:

If you have any questions about circumcision, please contact your Osteopathic Family Physician. Your physician can answer your questions and provide you with any additional information so that you can make the best informed decision based on the benefits and risks, as well as your religious, cultural, and personal preferences. In case of any emergency, you should call your doctor or 911 right away.

SOURCE(S): American Academy of Pediatrics, Circumcision. Gov, Mayo Clinic, National Institutes of Health, and Up-To-Date

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