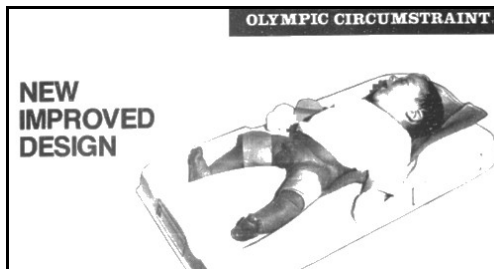


CIRCUMCISION: THE PROS AND CONS

by Wendy Hughes

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The ceiling was white! There was a bright light! His little face was all crinkled and becoming red. Tears flowed profusely. Screams poured! The screams filled the room of smiling adults. One particularly ugly female leered as they pulled down his little diaper for the ritual of penis mutilation. A scene such as this would have been banned in the porn shops of Time Square. But here it was, barbaric and sexual. Not a porn "loop"; Here was a live audience; SNUFF!! Mutilation of the male genital was about to occur and no one seemed to feel that anything was wrong. Shadowy figures touched him and out stretched his puny little arms. They pinned his elbows near his sides with Velco straps. More straps were wrapped around his tiny knees. He squirmed and screamed. The man with the knife bent over him and with his left hand grabbed his dick. He was in the shadow of a great monster. He screamed some more. Then came the pain. Every muscle wrenched. The Olympic Circumstraint had worked!!.



That's right: The Olympic Circumstraint. It is a device used during male circumcision. The device is a mount that infant males are strapped to before they are cut while being fully conscious. The Olympic Circumstraint is manufactured by Olympic Medical of 4400 Seventh South, Seattle, Washington. This is one of a number of medical supply houses that produce equipment that will secure a male infant during those traumatic times when an infant must be restrained. One ad for this product reads:

"In less than 30 seconds, a nurse can immobilize the struggling infant securely in the correct position with the Olympic Circumstraint. It works on a proven principle of positive 4 point restraint. Soft, wide Velcro straps encircle the infant's elbows and knees, depriving him of leverage. He's held safely and securely without danger of escape. Circumstraint's comfortable contoured shape positions the infant, hips elevated, perfectly presenting the genitalia."

JOHN - AGAINST

I think this is callous stuff, but don't get me wrong. I am not necessarily against circumcision. In fact about 5 to 10 percent of uncircumcised men will require this operation as an adult for medical reasons. I am opposed to any adult who uses force to perform circumcision against anyone, especially anyone too young to consent. The major differences between the performing of circumcision on infants and adults is that with adults

Henry: HENRY - IN FAVOR

The relative numbers are small. Out of the millions, Henry, most medical experts agree that circumcision can help to prevent all manner of sexual disease, including cancer, but about 750 cases will develop among every thing (with women including prostitution and uncircumcised men). What cause this is unclear, although primarily to defend from the greater risk of the strongest speculation is that the men who get it from the woman was not the bill of lard as they have not practiced proper hygiene, but no one is supposed to use a condom it was a lamb skin suit that is 100% of all instances of penile cancer occur in uncircumcised men.

Dr. Aaron Fink, Urologist, retired from private practice and author of, "Circumcision: A Parent's Decision For Life," argues that the uncircumcised penis is more vulnerable to lesion and, therefore, that I took I will never know to the extent that I was infection. Here is what happens when a circumcision saves from a disease because of circumcision. In hindsight, I am glad of its protection, however slight.

The fact is, it may have made all of the difference in the uncircumcised male the tip of the penis under the foreskin is a moist mucus membrane that is probably would have just kept putting it off. Even only one or two cells thick. When the foreskin is removed, I intellectually understood that there might be some sort of an advantage. I wouldn't care, I suspect, unless it was too late. I happens when a callous forms when skin is irritated.

This protective shield will be from 8 to 12 cells thick. It is reasoned that this shield provides a barrier to microscopic intrusion (Nightline, ABC TV, 8/4/88, transcript available from Journal Graphics, New York City)

Does the protective shield lessen the sense of touch? Men who have been circumcised as adults give conflicting reports. According to William Masters of the sex research team, Master and Johnson, no definitive scientific studies have been done which could lead us to any conclusion.

Let me, for a moment, speak personally. I was circumcised at birth. I have no memory of it. I am suspicious of anyone who might theorize on the effects of any trauma, whether it be from circumcision or from the birthing process itself. No doubt that as an infant I must have felt pain. But I will not have to worry about penile cancer as an adult.

I was a child of the sexual revolution of the 1960's and '70's. This period lasted until about 1983 or '84, when knowledge of the aids epidemic became common. Prior to then I experimented with almost

and yell under the knife, but it can be demonstrated that the nerve endings in a infant are active. This is one instance where, in the past, we have been misled. I suspect that this belief did not originate with malice. The belief that

John:

there IS consent and anesthesia is routinely used. John: Where infant boys are concerned, anesthesia is not used by most doctors because it is felt to be too risky. 5 percent when physicians were no longer paid. The vast majority of infant males go under the knife fully awake. Count me in with the anti circumcision * Until about 140 C.E., only the protruding tip of the foreskin was removed. No one listed in either the Old National Organization Of Circumcision Information Testament of the New Testament was subjected to Resource Centers (731 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, San Anselimo, CA 94960 (415) 454-5669) and NO

C.I.R.C. Of Washington (PO Box 75594, Seattle, WA 98129). more detail discussion of these and other points take a look at, Say No To Circumcision, by Thomas J. Ritter, M.D., paperback edition, Hourglass Books, Astoria, Or, 1992. I make my case against circumcising infants strictly

As a matter of civil rights. The health and religious issues leave me a little confused, although I will mention some of them below:

As I said above, there has been a great deal of in some physician was argued that the ears issues was the purpose. For years medical infant argues cultural and different have claimed that the benefits of a cloth. The point that is, of course causing abrasions not only is it lot of conscious to anyone who has watched an infant scream

* More males die in infancy from complications from getting circumcised than die from penile cancer in old age. In any event, a certain number of infant boys will die each year because of well intended mistakes. The number is very low; About one or two a year. But the loss of these lives represent mistakes that don't have to happen.

* Only 4% of intact males have a fully retractable foreskin at birth. Forcibly retracting the foreskin can cause tearing, which can lead to infection.

* In the early part of this century circumcision for males and removal of the clitoris were prescribed to prevent over 30 types of mental and physical ailments including insanity, homosexuality, cancer and epilepsy. Today we know there is no connection between any of these and leaving the penis intact. So, we have been misled before.

* Circumcision is still paid for by most U.S. insurance companies. It is an estimated \$240 business for physicians. In 1948 when England switched to socialized medicine, the government refused to pay for circumcisions. The circumcision rate fell to less than

infants don't feel the pain probably stems from the fact that adult men who have been circumcised as infants do not remember the experience.

Since about the mid 1800's, in the United States, the practice of circumcision has been promoted as a health benefit. It became popular. Circumcision was seen as the way to prevent almost any disease and it was even claimed that uncircumcised men could cause Cancer in their female partners. This is another instance of how in the past we were misled. By 1960 90% of American males were circumcised. Only about 5% were circumcised for religious reasons. Between 1971 and 1986 this percentage had dropped to about 59%, a figure well above the occurrence in Europe.

The question now becomes, is it worth risking even one boy for this type of elective surgery? To answer YES to this question, one must perceive greater risk if a boy does not take his chances under the knife.

Today both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have said that there is no medical reason to circumcise all newborns. While a number of individual doctors have strong opinions favoring the practice, the medical profession is divided; Even muddled, unclear and indecisive. Many think that the health problems articulated by Dr. Arron Fink and others could be eliminated through proper hygiene. Moreover, many feel that the numbers of uncircumcised men who could possibly contract a disease because they are uncircumcised is so small (or non existent) that it doesn't warrant the rare possibility of death or the universal experience of pain. On this last note psychologists debate the effect of this trauma on the subconscious. And so it goes back and forth.

John, continued:

The real issue for me, and the only one that can be demonstrated in the absolute, is the civil rights issue. I am not a doctor or a medical expert of any kind. I am simply a member of the public watching as others more educated about medicine squabble. From a health perspective my only advice is make sure that your uncircumcised male child learns to clean himself thoroughly and does it regularly. My emotional sentiments run contrary to the practice of circumcision being performed on infants. However well intentioned some good doctors (and parents) are about the benefits of circumcision, let them ply their persuasive powers on a thinking adult who can make up his own mind.

Below is an updated article.

NOTE: It is the position of the author that individuals should be allowed to weigh the pro's and con's for themselves when they become old enough to understand the issues.

You saw this article at: <http://www.ncfm.org>
National Coalition of Free Men
PO Box 129
Manhasset, NY 11030

Anesthetic For Circumcision Urged

Male newborns should receive an anesthetic before undergoing circumcision, according to a report published this week in The Journal of the American Medical Association.

The study was ended early for ethical reasons because part way through the trial it became obvious that infants who received anesthetic injections experienced much less discomfort and distress during and after circumcision. Their heart rates were lower and they cried less than babies who received either anesthetic creams or a placebo (inactive) cream before the procedure.

Of the 52 babies studied, two newborns in the placebo group became so distressed following circumcision that they were choking and had a hard time breathing.

However, researchers led by Dr. Janice Lander from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, note that babies who received any of the anesthetics studied fared better than those who did not receive anesthetic.

The researchers report that the ring block type of anesthesia proved the most effective. This involves injections of an anesthetic in a band or ring around the midpoint of the penis shaft. The other, less effective injection method - dorsal penile nerve block - calls for injections at two sites on the penis.

Lander and her colleagues note that unlike the other methods, ring block provided anesthesia throughout all stages of the procedure, including foreskin separation and removal.

The study authors note that many newborn boys who are circumcised in North America do not receive an anesthetic - numbers range from 64% to 96% in some areas. They recommend that this practice should change. "It is true that as adults, these newborns will not be able to retrieve the memory of their surgery and distress. This fact, however, cannot justify the practice of performing surgery without anesthetic." SOURCE: The Journal of the American Medical Association (1997;278:2157-2162) \

SOURCE: December 24, 1997, NEW YORK, Reuters News Service