

Circumcision Problems

Definition

- A circumcision is the removal of most of the male foreskin
- Questions about caring for the normal circumcised penis in a baby boy

Health Information

Symptoms

- The incision starts off red and tender. The tenderness should be much less by day 3.
- The head of the penis is bright red. It stays that way for a few weeks.
- The shaft of the penis is skin colored, not red.
- The incision can bleed 1 or 2 drops if it is irritated.

Normal Circumcision Healing

- The scab at the incision line comes off in 7 to 10 days.
- If a Plastibell (plastic ring) was used, it should fall off by 14 days. 10 days is the average. While it can't fall off too early, pulling it off can cause bleeding.
- Complications: Wound infections occur in less than 1 out of 200 circumcised boys.

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Policy

- Based on new research, the AAP revised their position on male circumcision (2012).
- They now state that the health benefits outweigh the risks of the procedure.
- But, the benefits are not great enough to recommend routine circumcision for all newborns.
- Parents need to decide what is best for their child.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- The tip (head or glans) of the penis is bright red or raw-looking after the foreskin is removed. This is normal. The skin will heal and look normal over the next 2 weeks.
- The area where the head and shaft of the penis come together may also be raw-looking.
- The rest of the penis should not be red.
- Pieces of skin or scabs near the incision line are often yellow in color. The color is from bilirubin. It is harmless and not an infection.
- Most circumcisions heal quickly.
- Infections are rare.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Plastic Ring:

- Gently wash the area with warm water twice a day.
- Also, do this if it becomes dirty with poop.

3. Incision (No Plastic Ring is Present):

- The dressing is gauze with petroleum jelly. Take this off 24 hours later. Sometimes, it will fall off on its own. If you need to remove it, use a warm wet washcloth.
- Gently wash the area with warm water twice a day. Also, do this if it becomes dirty with poop.

4. **Ointment for Pain:**
 - Put a layer of ointment on the incision line. This should lessen any pain and crying.
 - To prevent pain, use petroleum jelly. Put it on the incision line and head of the penis. Do this after each cleansing for the first 4 days. Other option: You can also use an antibiotic ointment. No prescription is needed.
 - Reason: Helps keep it soft and stops the diaper from sticking during healing.
5. **Crying - Don't Give Pain Meds:**
 - Circumcisions are usually not that painful.
 - Covering the wound with an ointment usually is all that is needed.
 - Do not give pain medicine (such as Tylenol) routinely.
 - If your baby is crying a lot, he may need to be seen. Call your doctor if you think your baby is in pain.
 - Your baby's doctor will decide if pain meds are needed.
6. **Bleeding - How to Stop:**
 - The circumcision wound can normally bleed a few drops. Most often, this is caused by the diaper rubbing on the wound.
 - Will stop on its own or with a few minutes of direct pressure.
 - Can stop bleeding by keeping the area soft with an ointment.
7. **Prevent Infections:**
 - Fasten the diaper loosely to prevent friction against the penis.
 - Avoid tub baths until 2 days after the cord has fallen off.
 - For circs done later, avoid tub baths for 7 days.
8. **What to Expect For A Plastic Ring:**
 - The plastic ring will normally fall off between 7 and 14 days (average 10).
 - It often hangs by a small piece of tissue for a few days.
 - It will come off on its own.
 - Pulling it off can cause bleeding.
 - It can't fall off too early.

Call Your Doctor If

- Starts to look infected
- Bleeding occurs
- Plastic ring moves onto shaft of the penis
- Plastic ring does not fall off by day 14
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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