



by Elwyn Moir
02 Oct 05:35am

I was circumcised and I want my foreskin back!

FILED UNDER: CIRCUMCISION, HEALTH, MEN, SEX, SEXUAL HEALTH

110 COMMENTS

I was in kindergarten when I first realised parts of my penis were missing - and it felt horrible. My parents were forthright in explaining my body to me as a child; I have clear early memories of bathing with my Dad and I can't recall a time when I didn't know I was circumcised.



However, when I saw other preschool boys who had "the whole package" I was taken aback by the contrasts - their penises had interesting parts mine lacked, and the glans (head) of an intact penis looked glossier, smoother, moister and far healthier than mine.

Proponents of circumcision claim that those against it have been brainwashed by anti-circumcision websites, however my own discomfort originated in these early observations available to any child with even a passing interest in difference.

I first considered foreskin restoration in my late teens, but dismissed the notion as outlandish and impractical. Yet in my mid-twenties I re-examined the option, seeking to relieve my anguish with my perceived genital mutilation and my concerns that I had little sensitivity in my penis.

Fortunately, most of the circumcised population get by just fine, even believing that reduced sensitivity with age is natural, but anecdotally it is easier to bring an intact man to orgasm, as borne out last year in a Danish study which found difficulties reaching orgasm to be almost three times as common in circumcised men.

We often hear medical updates about male circumcision, but considerations of human rights remain inadequately explored. The psychological issues in this debate are the most fascinating and difficult to access, yet are essential for understanding the moral dimensions of what is most often presented as a purely medical question.

I am a mental health worker and it is clear that the most psychologically adaptive response a man can make to having a circumcised penis is to be pleased with it and not give it a second thought - after all, there is nothing that can be done and being anguished by something that can't be changed is neither adaptive nor helpful.

I think a majority of men are successful in coping in this way, and it is common to see circumcised men contribute to this debate accordingly. However, the margins of every page of a widely read text on the history of circumcision and the techniques of foreskin restoration are filled with correspondence from men who feel harmed by circumcision, who resent having been robbed of their genital integrity and who want their foreskins back.

There are far more adult men trying to restore their foreskins than adult men lining up for cosmetic



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circumcision.

In childhood, my discomfort with having an altered penis was a minor issue and, as I became sexually aware in my early teens, I remember attempting to reframe my status into something positive by aiming to identify with a tribal preference for being in the circumcised faction.

But cognitive dissonance took its toll and this effort became untenable. I admitted to myself again the feelings I had been attempting to bury. I felt robbed and mutilated, even though I have what would be considered a physiologically uncomplicated, 'successful' circumcision. It was my psychological experience as the owner of a penis which determined my (dis)satisfaction.

In my mid-twenties, my GP supported my decision to restore my foreskin. He referred me to a specialist urologist who supervised and advised on my plan to manually stretch my remaining foreskin tissue back into the form of a full foreskin, just as many adults choose to stretch their ear lobes. Unfortunately, foreskin restoration options are limited – surgical procedures are generally unsatisfactory, especially insofar as they borrow skin from the scrotum or thigh.

Manual stretching does restore the mechanism of the foreskin and protect the glans of the penis, ameliorating its dried and callused condition, but does not restore the nerve endings of the foreskin, which originally included an extension of the sensitive frenulum to run around the aperture of the foreskin.

Restoration is an elaborate and demanding process, requiring a man to attach a device which gently grips the remaining foreskin on the shaft of the penis and apply tension by hanging weights or stretching an elastic strap from it to their thighs or shoulders.

This must be done for several hours most days for three to five years, the equipment must be hygienic and the process is often supplemented with limited use of a prescribed steroid cream to encourage the targeted cells to multiply. The whole process demands dedication, discipline and a constantly stable home life.

While it is an ordeal, online support communities of men restoring their foreskins number their members in the hundreds of thousands. Like me, they are sufficiently dissatisfied to pursue ultimately suboptimal remedies, even to these extents.

On the rare occasions the issue of surgically altering the genitals of future men makes it into the media, we are usually advised of the latest research showing circumcised men are very slightly less likely to contract various diseases that are either mild, vanishingly rare, or treatable like female genital conditions are – with antibiotics, creams or actual vaccines (rather than so-called "surgical vaccines" which prevent infection of a body part by removing it, denying the owner of that body any autonomy or responsibility for their own sexual outcomes).

We should protect our men from feelings of hurt and violation as we do our women.

My parents wanted the best for me, and like any parents did the best they could with the information they had. By sharing my experience, I hope to give voice to the countless unseen men who do complain about having their sexual anatomy altered needlessly when they were too young to hold an opinion, or mount opposition.

Parents must make many choices for their children – from their name, to what values to model for them. However, whether or not irreversibly cut off an erogenous, healthy part of their genitals is not a decision parents need to make during their custodial years caring for their offspring.

Circumcising children only closes off options, permanently. A few intact men do have dissatisfaction with not being circumcised, but the situation is not symmetrical: an intact man can always have the operation if that is what he wants, but once the foreskin is gone there is no way to adequately replace it.

Since penile preference is so subjective, it seems both logical and fair to leave the choice to the owner of the penis, thus empowering men and avoiding the lifelong pain that I and so many others have experienced. Childhood is a passing phase; circumcision lasts forever.

Elwyn will be amongst the guests on Insight in a discussion about male circumcision, tonight 8.30pm on SBS ONE.

Comments on this post will close at 8pm AEST.

www.thepunch.com.au%2Farticles%2Fi-was-circumcised-.t-my-foreskin-back%2F&layout=standard&show_faces=tr

Most commented
110 COMMENTS

Karl Williams says:

05:56am | 02/10/12

I'm really proud of you Elwyn!!! thanks for being a part of this journey and sharing your experience! Its going to be an interesting day. lol

Reply

acotrel says:

07:35am | 02/10/12

If you have never had a foreskin, you don't know what you are missing !

Pall Smenis says:

11:46am | 02/10/12

Poor fella is the first man I know not to be in love with his penis... lol

P. Walker says:

06:45am | 02/10/12

"moister and far healthier than mine"

How delusional can you be? Moisture is a breeding ground for bacteria. Thank your parents for a healthier life down there! The other boysies had more interesting parts. My god, what games did you play Elwyn?

If anything punch them for your name, poor sod!

Reply

Karl Williams says:

08:11am | 02/10/12

Please be respectful of Elwyns experience, speaking openly about this subject is something that we have both done because we want people to hear our stories.

Take time to read his article as you have mine and consider our perspectives, ask questions, contribute your experiences and participate in a discussion about this complex topic.

Sam says:

09:04am | 02/10/12

How dry are your eyeballs, P. Walker? The inside of your mouth? Ears? Anus?

"Dry" does not equal healthy. The foreskin is similar to the eyelids or the inside of the mouth; it is a mucous membrane and an important part of the immune system. Yes, it's moist - the pens is supposed to be moist, like the inside of a girl's vagina is supposed to be moist. We do not operate on little girls to change this, and in fact we decry the practise in other cultures.

James Stewart says:

08:53am | 02/10/12

There is such a thing as healthy bacteria you imbecile. Healthier Life? It isn't a healthier sex life that's for sure. You strike me as someone in denial and you call who delusional? Open your eyes.

James says:

09:47am | 02/10/12

Mr P.Walker - Your diagnosis is valid but the logical conclusion you draw is not. Increased bacteria can be managed and is not always a bad thing. Having a decreased amount of bacteria certainly does not imply a "healthier life down there." A circumcised man with poor hygiene has more health risks than any other man who washes regularly and exercises hygienic practices as a daily routine.

James says:

09:47am | 02/10/12

Mr P.Walker - Your diagnosis is valid but the logical conclusion you draw is not. Increased bacteria can be managed and is not always a bad thing. Having a decreased amount of bacteria certainly does not imply a "healthier life down there." A circumcised man with poor hygiene has more health risks than any other man who washes regularly and exercises hygienic practices as a daily routine.

Donielle Laine says:

11:14am | 02/10/12

So I guess we women should have our lady bits destroyed to avoid moisture....um...I don't think so!

A. Miller says:

12:00pm | 02/10/12

Vaginas are moist, produce more bacteria and smegma, yet you don't see baby girls getting lined up for labiaplasties.

P. Walker says:

12:32pm | 02/10/12

OK OK guys, "when I saw other preschool boys who had "the whole package" I was taken aback by the contrasts – their penises had interesting parts mine lacked, and the glans (head) of an intact penis looked glossier, smoother, moister and far healthier than mine."

Now tell me there isn't something wrong here for a "preschool boy" to be thinking THIS ??

Elwyn this is nothing more than a beat up to get men of similar ilk to be wearing these contraptions for how many years?? As if this is not going to go away after "restoration" has been completed. You have deeper issues here and as I said in my unpublished comment, this is yet another Mental Health" issue to clutch at!

DOB says:

03:06pm | 02/10/12

P Walker Ive never had that experience and it sounds like neither have you. But Elwyn has and its not your place to lambast him for something that obviously concerns him, just because you assume if you were in his place, or if you are circumcised, it doesnt concern you. Your ability to emphasise seems to be about on par with a brick's, which raises questions not just about Elwyn's psychological state (which Elwyn himself raises) but also about your psychological state. Think about it.

Nilbog says:

07:30am | 02/10/12

It's all about presentation.

If you want your "old mate" to look good for the ladies, you go and get a haircut and make sure he is groomed to look the part 😊

At the end of the day, it's the parent's choice, not the child's.

If you truly have such issues about this, as the author claims to have, I suggest seeking professional psychological help, as this does not seem to be normal to still hold as an issue as an adult. It suggests other underlying issues, probably to do with your relationship to your parents.

Reply

acotrel says:

08:36am | 02/10/12

'At the end of the day, it's the parent's choice, not the child's.'

When a child is born with indeterminate sex, it is often the parents' choice which sex the baby becomes. Does that make it right ?

fml says:

08:24am | 02/10/12

Agreed.

Most circumcised men do not have this problem. I was circumcised as a teenager. Not bothered, no ladies care. I am more upset my parents didn't buy me a pair of Jordan 5s when they first came out. I think I can smell a law suit coming.

Sam says:

09:09am | 02/10/12

If I had my daughter operated on, I would go to jail. If a woman is dissatisfied that her body was altered without her consent, would you say the same to her.

The parent's will not be having sexual intercourse with that penis. They will not be urinating or masturbating with it. Why then, is it their choice? There is no reason to do this to a child other than parental preference, which is no reason at all. I may not tattoo my baby because of a personal preference. I may not give my daughter a boobjob because of personal preference. This is cosmetic surgery and should not be performed on non-consenting minors.

James Stewart says:

09:11am | 02/10/12

The fact that they mutilated my penis is the only real reason I have an issue with my parents. When I learned what they stole from me my relationship with them was shattered. At the end of the day it is my body and should be my choice.

Intactivist mama says:

09:14am | 02/10/12

I am a parent. I make choices for my kids all day. I do not, however, have any right to cut off a functioning part of their body. In the US, all forms (even just a nick) of female circumcision became illegal in 1996. Why? There are health benefits, it's cleaner, it looks and feels better. Why is it illegal? Because it's someone else's body so it's their decision, not mine.

Nilbog says:

09:39am | 02/10/12

Like I said, parent's choice.

That's what being a legal guardian is all about. Making decisions on behalf of your child.

If you don't like, have a law banning it punishable by imprisonment. If that's the road you want to travel.

Until such time, here's a novel idea: stay out of other parents' business. They don't want you there.

Simple really.

Oh @ fml - Jordan 5s? What about Reebok pumps??

VCB76 says:

09:40am | 02/10/12

Mutilated penises do not look good or feel good. They look sad. Foreskin is extremely sexy.

fml says:

10:05am | 02/10/12

Nilborg,

I was a conformist when I was a child so I wanted Jordans, now that I am a little older I realise how naive I was and so now fully understand that pumps should've been the only choice.

Elwyn Moir says:

10:13am | 02/10/12

So Nilbog, legislation and punishment is the only way to promote moral progress? You're right that parents are currently legally entitled to circumcise - that's not the argument here. The argument is that while parents absolutely must make many choices for their children, whether to cut off part of their genitals is not one of those choices.

Our society is based on self ownership - that's why people own their own labour. Parents are custodians, not owners:

they are obliged to take care, not to impose their cosmetic surgical preferences or biases.

A. Miller says:

12:04pm | 02/10/12

Woman married to a guy who was "groomed" without his consent. I wish he was left alone. His penis is forever scarred due to his Parents' choice and I wish we could have sex the way God intended. The foreskin is there for a reason. And why shouldn't he have issue with it as an adult? Adults are the ones who use their penises for sexual pleasure, and he feels he is missing out. He is fully entitled to feel the way he does.

fml says:

02:14pm | 02/10/12

"Our society is based on self ownership - that's why people own their own labour. Parents are custodians, not owners: they are obliged to take care, not to impose their cosmetic surgical preferences or biases. "

elwyn,

Parents are legal guardians for the children and are allowed to make that decision, so what? if a child wishes to get a tattoo at 10 years of age the parent should have no right to say, no. you are not going to get one? All this self ownership for children under the age of 18 is going to do is promote legal rights for the children, and when the children stuff their lives up, they will sue the parents for not teaching them right from wrong. It's not about self ownership its about parents making a legal decision for the child, FGM doesn't even come into this because that practice is illegal, either you are calling for circumcision to be banned or you are not saying anything at all.

C. Bedford says:

03:13pm | 02/10/12

Should it be the parents choice to get their child's ears stretched or their nipples pierced? Remember that circumcision is a cosmetic body modification. No one should rob you of your choice to be circumcised or natural.

Elwyn Moir says:

03:44pm | 02/10/12

"so what? if a child wishes to get a tattoo at 10 years of age the parent should have no right to say, no. you are not going to get one? "

fml, Sounds like we're arguing for the same thing - for children to be nurtured and cared for, and spared from permanent bodily alterations until they reach maturity - e.g. 16 or 18, not 10.

Barefoot Intactivist says:

04:02pm | 02/10/12

A parent's choice? Just like it's a parent's choice in Egypt to have their daughter's clitoris or clitoral hood cut out. Wake up—cutting up a child's genitals is child sexual abuse. Just because you don't feel you've suffered adverse effects doesn't mean countless others haven't. For all YOU know, the author of this article had 5X more skin amputated in his circumcision than YOU, so how about showing some EMPATHY and less arrogance?

Mahhrat says:

07:57am | 02/10/12

Thank you for sharing your story, Elwyn.

I'm going to make this really easy:

If Elwyn were female, his parents would have had every legal and societal book thrown at them. It would not matter their religion, their culture, their tradition or their personal beliefs.

Equality demands the same thing happen with men. Male genital mutilation is a barbaric practice that needs to stop. I can't believe that in 2012 that even needs to be said.

If you are happy with your mutilation, then I'm pleased (as is Elwyn, apparently) that you survived the procedure so well.

If you grow up and decide to alter your body, then that is absolutely your choice. Once you're able to make that decision properly, full boot to you.

Enforcing your beliefs on your child's penis is so disgracefully wrong that - while I do not ever want to silence someone's right of reply - I'm amazed that so many seek to even quibble on it at all.

Reply

acotrel says:

09:27am | 02/10/12

It is all part of political conditioning - authoritarianism begins in the crib !

carmen says:

08:10am | 02/10/12

people from all religions advised to this operation

it is more healthy

the foreskin is a nest of bacterias and viruses

it causes infection and pain

thank you dad

he did well for you

Reply

Hugh7 says:

11:05am | 02/10/12

There are only two religions that support this operation - both because, we are told, a man long ago believed his god had told him to do it. 13 years later the same man thought the same god told him to KILL his son and he was all set to do that too. We should do what he did? I don't think so.

The whole body is "a nest of bacteria and viruses" - they make us live.

It is "more healthy" to cut any part off because then you can't get any sickness in that part, but we don't do it to any other part, and we shouldn't do it to this one.

Elwyn has every right to be angry. If you knew what you are missing, you'd be angry too.

A. Miller says:

12:21pm | 02/10/12

Only one religion advises this, if you actually study religious texts, and that is Judaism. When it was performed as a ritual when it was commanded, it was simply a nick of the foreskin to draw blood.

As to the rest of that drivel, myth, myth, myth. Foreskin protects the penis, and it does not cause infection and pain.

fml says:

08:16am | 02/10/12

You can grow it back, just do a google search.

There are stretching techniques or probably grafting a bit of skin from your bum.

Seriously it is not that big an issue, maybe see a therapist there may also be some underlying issues as well (it can't hurt, not saying there is anything wrong with you as well, just some friendly advice).

Reply

Elwyn Moir says:

09:17am | 02/10/12

I actually describe restoration techniques in my article, above. No need for Google 😊

Simon Harris says:

09:34am | 02/10/12

So a person was strapped or held down as a baby and had healthy, functional parts of the most intimate part of his body sliced off. Now, as an adult he comes to realise what has been taken away. Sounds like a big issue to me, and in fact, has been a big issue for me also.

fml says:

09:53am | 02/10/12

My apologies.

I am being serious here, what about inventing some form of wig? or rubber hat for the little guy? You can patent it and

make a million.

fml says:

09:54am | 02/10/12

I was circumcised as a teenager, so I remember full well the physical pain it causes.

Yes, when a child and changing you get a few jokes, and as an adult you get a few muslim or jewish jokes, but you give as good as you get.

Also, I apologise if this is a repeat, but how about inventing a rubber hat, or wig for the little guy? You could make a fortune!

Did you know the chinese use the same word for crisis and opportunity? Crisitunity!

Jai says:

11:15am | 02/10/12

You think someone has mental issues for being less than happy with the fact that someone amputated part of their body against their will? I think he'd need to see a therapist if he wasn't mad or upset.

LC says:

12:54pm | 02/10/12

Technically yes, but you cannot grow back the lost nerves. Frenelum: Gone. Ribbed band: Gone. 1000's, maybe even 10,000's of fine nerves that feel stretch and movement: Gone. There's no getting them back.

What you'll get back is the motion of the foreskin over the glans during intercourse and a protective covering for the glans, both increasing it's sensitivity.

It's safer to call a restored foreskin a "faux-skin". Sure, it's better than nothing, but it'd be EVEN BETTER if it was left alone to begin with.

Hugh7 says:

04:30pm | 02/10/12

@fml. There are two such products, the Senslip and the Manhood (really).

But why should anyone have to pay good money to only partially undo something that should not be done? The foreskin is standard equipment, factory installed, and circumcision, even just after delivery, is still theft.

Gerry W says:

08:38am | 02/10/12

Stupid conversation there is no proof whatsoever that it is a better option to ward off diseases. There is zero difference between Muslims that are all circumcised or Indian that are rarely cut, than any other race due to being circumcised, in fact there are more circumcised with HIV. Also when a tiny baby is born the doctor has no idea of penis growth so it finishes up tight and lacks sensation due to massive nerve damage. Still a barbaric act for male or female.

Reply

Alfie says:

08:27am | 02/10/12

"..their penises had interesting parts mine lacked."

To think...all these years, all I have wanted is a Ferrari.

Reply

Scotchfinger says:

09:43am | 02/10/12

let me guess, you were given a Mini Minor? 🤔

fml says:

09:55am | 02/10/12

Yep, all boys want to shave when they get older, these are the boys who eventually growing long beards.

Alfie says:

12:47pm | 02/10/12

Nup Scotchy...I got a stretch limo. Lol

Scotchfinger says:

01:17pm | 02/10/12

ha ha Alfie. The girls don't call me 'Jaguar E Type V12' for nothing!

Peter Thornton says:

08:45am | 02/10/12

Bloody Nora, not only am I weighing-in on whether or not it's better being a pencil dick™, I actually lolling at arcotrel.

Reply

Grant says:

08:51am | 02/10/12

Elwyn

I am circumcised, and your story is the complete opposite of my positive experience. The fact that you believe that you have been mutilated sounds like something hasn't gone right with your circumcision or you have some other underlying medical or psychological condition.

Mine is clean, healthy and looks great, so I am told. Anecdotally my experience is that a lot of women prefer the cleaner, dynamic look. My girlfriend doesn't really like uncircumcised and thinks they're a little gross.

Your comment that if circumcised men who are happy with it and therefore must be repressing their feelings is offensive.

Reply

CliffAtl says:

09:59am | 02/10/12

DeNIAL is not only a river in EGYPT!! You are ignorant to the fact that your penis is mutilated! You have millions of nerve endings lopped off with that knife, your glan was exposed to fecal matter and urine as a child in diapers, and from that day you glan has been exposed to diapers, underwear and what ever else you wore increasingly desentising the very mechanism you need to acheive orgasm. Your penis was reduced in size! On average uncircumcised men are 3" longer. You penis is now less sensitive then the soles of your feet... and it only get worst with age.. Soon you will join the ranks of those circumcised men who need ED medication to keep an erection and can not acheive an orgasim under normal sexual conditions. It's coming.. keep living!

Shea Moir says:

10:33am | 02/10/12

The only reason you find it offensive is because you yourself have suppressed the fact and subconsciously on some level you do feel robbed. Your girlfriend has no right to like or dislike circumcision as it has never been an issue for her. If you both see no problem with strapping down a BABY and taking away parts of their body, than you both need psychological help as there certainly is an underlying issue that should be discussed immediately with mental health professionals. People that think its okay to start cutting into innocent children, because they think it helps them stay clean, are clearly delusional and should really read some anatomy books. I would love to see how your partner felt if I wanted to start chopping parts of her daughter away because I believed it would keep her vagina healthy and clean. "I just wanna chop off the clitoris, Its a far healthier way to live" "How can you think its not healthier that I don't start cutting away at your daughter?" " I really think you should let me remove her clitoris." "Don't worry she wont mind" Do these views not seem incredibly sick and morbid to you? I worry about people that feel this way about little boys. Consider others feelings before becoming so flippant and mighty. EveryBODY is different. It does not look clean that's for sure. It looks like meat that's been left out to dry in the sun for years. Its not healthy. It looks shit. It doesn't need to happen. I could spend my time fighting for gay marriage, but I don't believe people need to get married, I do however believe that babies need to stop being mutilated to go on and mutilate others and think that its okay.

Tim says:

10:34am | 02/10/12

LOL,

solid cognitive dissonance there.

What do you think girls are going to say to you? "Nah it's horrible."

Do you actually tell your girlfriend that her bum looks big in those jeans?

Grant says:

11:52am | 02/10/12

I am happy with my dynamic and clean style. Other men I speak to who have had a circumcision have also reported having happy feelings with the look.

@ Tim, these anecdotal comments were also from some funny discussions with women friends. Where I have been told that they prefer the clean look, and I quote "not the gross worm thing". That's a quote, not my term.

@ Shea Moir

My comments have been about how positive I feel about my little dude.

I find what you have written to be slightly rambling. It feels like you transferring your own issues onto me. The fact is, my penis looks really really good, and I like it. It's only the foreskin that has been removed, not massive chunks. So I'm not even sure we are talking about the same medical procedure here.

@ CliffAtl

There is no cognitive dissonance. I understand that there is substantial research surrounding the health benefits of removing the foreskins. Regarding infections, sexually transmitted diseases. Plus I thought circumcision simply removes the foreskin, so 3" seems like a lot to be removed, perhaps 5mm would be difference that the foreskin provides. In addition, the sensitivity is great, nothing like my feet. I am not sure where you get your information from.

I'd be interested to hear some women's opinion on which they prefer.

egg says:

12:14pm | 02/10/12

@CliffAtl & Shea Moir, why should we take your experiences seriously when you don't do the same for Grant? Does it intimidate you that someone else doesn't feel inadequate for having had the same procedure? Why so aggressive towards someone who feels fine with themselves?

Scotchfinger says:

12:22pm | 02/10/12

CliffAtl, your post is ranting, nearly hysterical and unsupported by facts. The circumcised penis is 'now less sensitive than the soles of your feet'... either you have very ticklish feet (perhaps a foot fetish?) or you have been speaking with men who have callused dicks from too much jerking off. Alternately, you are just making stuff up! I favour the latter explanation.

Shea Moir, I don't believe you are in a fit mental state to debate this.

Tim says:

12:43pm | 02/10/12

Grant,

once again do you honestly think these women will tell you the truth?

I've had similar discussions and women say either they don't care or the opposite of what your saying.

I'm not silly enough to believe them either way and by the by I think it's irrelevant what they think.

Most men prefer women with larger breasts but there's very few men who would promote all women going out and getting breast augmentations done.

The substantial research you mention usually involves African nations where hygiene isn't a priority and tiny chances of disease that can be solved by non surgical means. The risks to babies and men outway the benefits.

If adult males want to go and have circumcisions done for non medical reasons, then they should be able to (paid for by themselves). But parents should not be allowed to have it done to their children.

VVS says:

02:23pm | 02/10/12

Bottom line is pretty much this (granted it is a generalisation):

Men have a strong connection to their penises. That is normal.

We like them. They are fun. They allow us to pee standing up. We let them make a lot of decisions for us, hoping that it will lead them to exploring a vagina or 2 (hopefully in the same session). They stand to attention at inappropriate times. But for all this, 99% of us wouldn't change our "little buddy" (unless it was to be bigger).

If a man does not have that affection for his penis, and dislikes how it is (whether he wishes he was uncircumcised or vice versa), that says something about that man, and his mental state.

It says nothing about the penis.

It is not to state there is anything wrong to have such mental state, but it is definitely not the norm.

Elwyn Moir says:

03:32pm | 02/10/12

LOL Shea Moir, please be respectful of people if you must defend me



Not to sound unappreciative, but I worry that the explosive heat of this debate only pushes those who think about these issues to the extremities and allows for little collaboration, consensus or moral progress.

Spanx says:

06:46pm | 02/10/12

I'm a girl and honestly I don't care either way. Personally I'm pretty sure that most of us love your 'little guy' as much as you do. I've been with men with both and have not had a problem with either. They're all awesome. I do have a son and he is uncircumcised though. Just think it ultimately should be his own decision and was not really keen on the process of how it's done

Brother K says:

08:58am | 02/10/12

Well-written... you covered a lot of ground in a limited space. They brand men like a herd of cows. "Neonatal post-traumatic stress disorder" — the recurrent American (& Australian) nightmare for boys. If it were women tied down & cut, the Feminists would be howling all over the world. The male genitals are a cheap commodity. There is no argument too absurd for the circumcisers. They insult the appearance of the intact penis, claim that circumcision heals everything from body warts to HIV, and draw an illogical distinction between female & male genitals. Circumcision is the mark of a slave, not a free man. It will be up to merciful mothers to spare their sons this humiliation. With a few exceptions, most circumcised men are too defensive (and narcissistic) to own up to their loss. Please see "The Circumcision of Benjamin" at <http://tinyurl.com/bmh2p2m>

Reply

Scotchfinger says:

09:48am | 02/10/12

some Australian aboriginal tribes used to (and may still) practice subincision. If you don't know what this is, google it...but be prepared to wince. None of this whining about hurting 'my best friend'. Modern blokes perhaps are worrying a bit too much about their willies. Leave it to the girlfriends/wives to worry about it (in fact they don't care), turn off the computer and go and get a hobby.

Dave says:

09:22am | 02/10/12

I used to agree with some of the commenters here that a circumcised penis was better. But experience has shown me that an uncircumcised penis has more movement, is self-lubricating and in fact much sexier than scar tissue.

Those who think it is just a bit of skin are clueless about the make-up of this piece of the human body, the sensitivity it adds to the penis and the way it supports motion during intercourse.

Those who say it is gross or dirty seem to forget the fact that the vagina produces many of the same oils, you just can't see it cause it is inside.

And those who say it is unattractive - you but you have been conditioned to think that way. Try to remember that the human body is beautiful, man or woman, and that a penis has a purpose beyond something for women to look at!

Reply

Sarah says:

09:30am | 02/10/12

It makes me angry that some people are so flippant about male genital mutilation. Yes Mutilation. MGM. Same as FGM, it's still being recommended for girls who have "abnormally large" clits. SERIOUSLY. Knives do not belong near healthy genital tissue. Period.

Adult advocates of infant circumcision, I ask you this. Would you like (perhaps another) piece of your penis removed today? If female, how about you, we can apply some phenol to that clit, no cutting even required. No? No takers? So why do we do it to powerless infants? Because they can't run away.

Reply

Jason says:*11:41am | 02/10/12*

Thankyou Sarah ! A foreskin is a males right to have and parents should not be able to determine whether a man gets to keep his foreskin unless their is a genuine medical condition.

We dont neaten up girls genitals to make them look better so we damn should be touching baby boys already perfect kits.

Ellipsis00 says:*09:31am | 02/10/12*

Look at all these circumcised men commenting, rushing to defend their mutilation. Pushing the same lies that it's "healthier" or "looks better" or the foreskin is a breeding ground for bacteria and utter garbage like that. ALL MYTHS! Urine is sterile, smegma is dead skin cells. Washing each night and wearing a condom gives the same protection, circumcised or not. Removing the foreskin and nerves is a total waste and a pointless destruction.

European countries (where nearly everyone has a foreskin) have lower rates of STD's, HIV and erectile dysfunction when compared to countries such as the United States where the large majority are cut. Even some African nations have higher rates of HIV in CIRCUMCISED men - that your circ pushers don't tell you about.

Believe the lies all you want. I wouldn't want to live without my foreskin. To have to look at that scarred, dried out mess everyday, and be missing 20,000 nerves and gliding mechanism. It'd be terrible compared to what I have now.

But you didn't get a choice. Spreading bullshit, and forcing it on babies isn't the way to deal with it. Maybe you're the ones who need to seek psychological help.

Reply

Dan says:*09:27am | 02/10/12*

As a man with a foreskin we are taught from a very young age to retract the skin and wash underneath. It's also interesting that Smegma (aka dick cheese) which is often attributed to causing these infections is actually antibacterial. With today's hygiene products, the cleanliness debate really is insignificant. I do find it interesting that women feel they have the right to comment on pain from a foreskin when clearly they've have never had one

. If some of the respondents had done their research they would know that during the circumcision, a band of nerve endings are removed. By grafting skin from another part of the body, these nerves won't be replaced. This may not be a big issue for you (you may still have yours, or you may be a woman) but to many men around the world, they wish they still had their foreskin. I'm sure there are big issues in their lives that we would consider trivial. How about instead of judging how Elwyn FEELS about living without a foreskin how about we look at the issue at hand and that if you missed it, is genital mutilation.

I commend Elwyn for sharing his deeply personal battle and story. Male circumcision really is an archaic practice that is best left up to the male when he is old enough to make the decision.

Elwyn, I pledge to you that I will keep my sons intact.

Reply

Eduardo says:*09:30am | 02/10/12*

I feel really sorry for those of you who are unable to see past your own foreskins (or lack thereof). First of all, I believe we should sympathise with Elwyn's perception of his circumcision.

I come from a different cultural background—I am Brazilian (which means I belong to the largest Catholic country in the world) and, to minimise circumcision to a religious issue is absolutely laughable as, here, circumcision is seen as a strictly and ultimately medical intervention to those boys with phimosis—a condition where the foreskin cannot be fully retracted over the glans.

That condition can, in fact, lead to bacterial and even fungal infections as there is no way to clean and wash the glans properly. I am not circumcised and I owe a fully retractable foreskin and I know for a fact that I have more pleasure than circumcised guys; not to mention that many circumcised penises may grow to be deformed as the lack of the foreskin might impede the full development of the penis, causing it to curve anomalously. That alone should be reason enough to prevent the epidemics of uncontrolled circumcisions in the nation.

Now, it is funny—and I am being ironic here—that some people see themselves vociferating against practices of cliterectomy as a savage practice (as it is typically linked to some African nations) but, when male circumcision is presented as a comparable practice of genital mutilation, it is "religious", "hygenic" and, therefore, "civilised".

It is not. It is just as barbaric. And, if you can make an effort to see it this way, you may be able to understand Elwyn's pain.

Reply

Pongo says:

09:51am | 02/10/12

There is nary a medical or paediatric association in the world that recommends involuntary genital cutting of boys, least of all in Australia. Not even the American Academy of Pediatrics makes such a recommendation.

For those who insist it is up to parents to decide for their children, why does this only apply to boys and not girls. Australian society, I understand, has a substantial population of recent immigrants, many of whom are from Malaysia and Indonesia where sunat, the ritual cutting of girls private parts is a medicalised and accepted custom. A portion of a young girl's labia minora, about the size of a half grain of rice, is cut off. You get no argument from these parents that cutting their children's private parts, boys and girls for that matter is their decision, but Australian law denies them this choice. There is one set of laws for boys and another for girls Why do you accept such a glaring double standard?

Reply

Mama says:

09:40am | 02/10/12

Realistically at present this is a parents decision not the child's. Right or wrong that's how it is. I have a newborn son & the decision to circumsize or not was a hard one to make. Here's why:

There's contradictory medical views as to whether it is beneficial or not. The pro studies are apparently all talking about the benefits for 3rd world boys. Paediatricians from different countries support the practice while some don't. This can be an issue when your partner is from another country/culture. Midwives & obstetricians in hospital don't really want to talk about it when you bring it up. You only see a paediatrician when you're leaving the hospital & it's a very brief visit. I was told by a nurse to not mention it in hospital but to seek it out with a private doctor if I wanted the procedure for my son. No doctors available to you seem to want to help sort the fact from fiction & just talk about it.

When going to our parents for their advice my father actually cited one side of the medical fence: it cleaner, less infection, safer for future partners etc. Basic hygiene, safe sex practices & the cervical cancer vaccine would help deliver these outcomes too.

You hear the friends of friends stories where their 5 year old needed a medical circumcision due to the foreskin being too tight or repeat infection. They say its quite psychologically distressing for a boy who is conscious of their genitals to lose a part of it & they regret not getting it done when they were babies & unaware. It's also apparently more painful for a child or man to have the procedure done.

Then there's the "want to look like daddy" thing. I have to admit my husband didn't care either way, he is circumcised. The cosmetic preference was something that concerned me more. This was an emotional response, when pregnant these responses can be hard to get over.

My son isn't circumcised but my point is it was very hard to make this decision with so many opinions presented as fact. In QLD state doctors aren't allowed to offer it & seem afraid to discuss it. This just pushes the issue underground into the hands of laymen with their own agendas. Parents who are leaning one way will undoubtedly seek out material or opinions that favour their bias. This decision shouldn't be made on the basis of propaganda or emotion. This really should be an issue that should be discussed, parents need to be educated & the issue made clear. They do it with breastfeeding why not this? Most parents after all just want what's best for their kids but what that is seems to depend on who you talk to.

Reply

Tracey says:

02:49pm | 02/10/12

Thank you Mama, you raise some excellent points. Bravo to everyone for talking about it, there have been some wonderful contributions and sensible discussion on this site since Elwyn and Karl have shared their stories. I also participated in the SBS Insight program airing tonight and was touched by the many personal stories from those brave enough to tell them. If only such good information and discussion was available to me when I needed to decide 20 years ago - back in the days before internet research was available, it might have given me more confidence to make an informed decision for my son.

Mama - the points you raised are exactly the considerations I was grappling with, and whilst it's all very easy for men to take one side or the other based on their experiences, and whether or not they have a foreskin, it's very difficult being the mother who ultimately has to choose. It's a huge responsibility, and a highly emotive topic so it's not always easy to get good, unbiased advice.

I believe the key is in your last paragraph - more education, more discussions, more awareness, and less judgement of those who made choices, which they genuinely believed to be in the best interests of their son.

Deborah Woods says:

10:01am | 02/10/12

Good for you for writing this article & trying to make others aware that it's really quite simple in the end: His body, his choice. The only reason parents still have a say in this barbaric practice being done to unconsenting minors is because it's not illegal YET. It's coming though.....

Bravo, Elwyn.

Reply

Dr. Richard L. Matteoli says:

10:06am | 02/10/12

Circumcision is the socialization of feminine rape in Clitoral Enhancement. This is as the dysfunctional male who attacks women with a knife. She aint got one big enough to penetrate. Also she uses Passive Initiation to get men to do her bidding for her. Transference of Aggression. Unresolved conflicts with her own sexuality and not being the leisured sex. All genital rituals are from the feminine with the theological base of menstrual blood mainly through goddess worship. Self-glorification. Bridegroom in blood. Stupid men agree with it because they will for sex. Right on Elwyn. Sources: Lloyd deMause, Joseph Campbell, Erich Neumann, Catherine Bell and the FBI's John Douglas, Robert Ressler, Roy Hazelwood and Ann Burgess. All else is intrigue.

Reply

James H says:

09:58am | 02/10/12

For those who have criticised Elwyn's psychological condition - You are certainly making significant presumptions based on fuzzy logic and your own understanding of how you think the world should be.

Elwyn is arguing from a human rights perspective suggesting that the individual should have the opportunity to make their own choice as to whether they get circumcised. He was courageous enough to use his own experience as an example and some of you suggest his mental health sketchy as a result of his courage. I could go on to say that perhaps those criticising are circumcised and, in order to explore the true meaning this has for them, they are stating that Elwyn must have something wrong with them. We call that cognitive dissonance and it is a BIG presumption to suggest that what you are doing when criticising Elwyn is an attempt to avoid the anxiety you may feel when really considering that a part of your penis was removed without your consent and there is very little you can do about it. Presumptions, and comments aimed at questioning the authors motivations, are often wrong.....

Reply

Kelev says:

10:53am | 02/10/12

If the writer were a woman this wouldn't even be a question (at least not in the civilised world). And if this had been the story of a woman wanting what had been taken from her as a result of circumcision, no one would be doubting her (at least not in the civilised world).

Male circumcision removes 15 to 20 sq. inches of adult tissue—tissue that is highly sensitive, vein-filled and nerve-rich. That is actually more than what most women lose in the most common forms of female circumcision.

Boys deserve exactly the same rights to whole bodies that girls have. Period.

LC says:

12:10pm | 02/10/12

Something is probably wrong with the mental health of those people. Not quite "men in white coats" material, but definitely something wrong. They know they've been surgically altered in a VERY personal fashion for no good reason. The only way they can feel better about the whole thing is to frankly make sure there is no uncircumcised men around them. It's a matter of if they can't have it, no one can.

Some men eventually get over that, and work to ensure that people don't have to go through what they did and I salute them. Some don't and they are the ones causing the problem. They are the ones creating the bogus health claims saying circumcision prevents HIV/HPV/UTI etc. They are the ones who say "IT LOOKS BETTER". They are the ones who will end up circumcising their own kids, whom will then take on similar attitudes and the cycle continues.

I for one won't just sit by idly and let that happen.

fml says:

02:30pm | 02/10/12

James,

I would like to know why some people have a problem with it then, and others do not?

JM says:

10:17am | 02/10/12

Parents do make all sorts of decisions for their kids hoping they are doing what's in the best interest of the child but making a decision to remove a functioning body part before there is any indication that it maybe required is

unnecessary. Many boys grow up with no need of their foreskin removed and a small few may need it removed for medical reasons. Unless there is a medical need then why not leave it to till the man can decide for himself for all the other "sexual health" benefits the circumcision claims. After once the decision has been made and the foreskin removed there is no way to fully restore the previous function of the foreskin.

A man's feelings towards HIS penis (the way it feels, looks, functions) Is only relevant to only himself. While some are happy with what's down stairs others are not. Forcing one perspective onto a baby and not allowing them the intellectual choice for the rest of their life is not fair.

Reply

Chad Rivera, Esq. says:

10:18am | 02/10/12

Circumcision is a sex crime of the worst kind; sexual torture and genital mutilation of a child who cannot consent.

Reply

James Wright says:

10:56am | 02/10/12

Thank you, Elwyn, for your courage in speaking out on a topic that's mostly taboo in our society.

My experience is very similar to your own. Discovering at a young age that someone cut away functional, erogenous tissue from my most private parts has caused me great emotional distress, even decades later.

People who claim that male and female circumcision are incomparable and viewing the issue through their own cultural biases. They are certainly not looking at the issue from the perspective of the child, nor from a position of equality or basic human rights.

Reply

Shea Moir says:

10:46am | 02/10/12

Well done Elwyn for fighting for the right to be INTACT. Child mutilation is an abhorrent excuse for keeping a child clean and healthy. I Am Elwyn's brother, and I am INTACT. He has never tried to make me feel bad about the fact that I am intact and he is not, however I do feel a sense of guilt for him that he was robbed of the pleasure of having apart of his penis that I happen to love having. Its slippery and its fun. I see no slippery fun happening with circumcised men even with a healthy female partner, hes not doing his part to make the fun all the more pleasurable. I feel sorry for people that don't have it. Anyone that says, "You never had it, so you don't know what you are missing" Is in serious serious denial. Its the best feeling in the world to know that I have a part of my penis that a lot of men don't. Anyone that thinks child mutilation is okay, needs severe education. Thanks Elwyn for fighting what you believe in and sweeping out this taboo from under the rug where it has been kept for far too many generations. People should look up to you. And for those men that think your not missing anything because you don't have it, I am gonna tell you right here and now, you have no idea how good it feels to be completely healthy and intact and the pleasure it brings during coitus.

Reply

AdamC says:

11:08am | 02/10/12

I do not really approve of circumcision (I do not think it should be banned, of course) but this article is really bizarre. I was half expecting to read a punchline at the end.

If you are that concerned about the current state of your willy, I doubt the mere lack of a foreskin is the underlying problem.

Reply

Hugh7 says:

11:21am | 02/10/12

Heaven save us from amateur psychotherapists! He says clearly what the issue is, and it's a real issue.

AdamC says:

01:16pm | 02/10/12

He does no such thing, Hugh7, aside from coining the almost laughable term 'genital integrity'. Hence my wondering whether the whole piece was some sort of elaborate joke.

Like I said, I think circumcision is unnecessary and, therefore, undesirable. But we need to keep some perspective in this discussion.

Elwyn Moir says:

03:40pm | 02/10/12

Why is genital integrity funny? Is this like a Year 6 class giggling when the teacher says it's time for sex ed?

This debate needs to be taken seriously. I hoped explaining my anguish would help inform the debate. I also made it clear I wasn't the only person in the world restoring his foreskin, but one of hundreds of thousands. Men's feelings of hurt are taboo in any case, let alone when it relates to their genitals.

AdamC says:

04:26pm | 02/10/12

"Why is genital integrity funny? Is this like a Year 6 class giggling when the teacher says it's time for sex ed?"

Not at all. I just think devising silly neologisms detracts from serious discussion.

"This debate needs to be taken seriously. I hoped explaining my anguish would help inform the debate."

I was not trying to unnecessarily dismiss or ridicule your feelings of hurt, Elwyn. I suppose I just find them a little odd. While rates of circumcision are patchy in Australia (strangely, though, Wikipedia claims more than half of men are circumcised here) and the sense of 'difference' in terms of your genitals seems to have initiated this whole thing, circumcision is common in many countries.

As such, literally tens of millions of men have been circumcised with little or no feelings of anguish or later attempts to remake their foreskin. In light of that, how have you satisfied yourself that it is, in fact, the circumcision that is the problem rather than something else?

Juan Alzate says:

11:43am | 02/10/12

Thank you for speaking up. We need to speak up, we need to tell the world that this is not alright to do to a child.

It was just 33 years ago that someone started speaking against FGM, and today the Western world pretty much recognizes FGM as what it is, a cruel and dangerous practice. Now it's time to bring MGM (Male Genital Mutilation, AKA circumcision) to the spotlight.

Some people may think it's not a big deal. But if it's not a big deal, then leave it alone! It's a big deal to its only truthful owner.

Reply

P. Walker says:

12:14pm | 02/10/12

Elwyn, I noticed you did not post my comment on "Regressive Memory Loss" whereby kids were convinced that their parents raped them? There appears to be a new "growth industry" of convincing men to grow their foreskins back after their parents abused them! Is this the new Mental Health" approach of the new millennium? I have never heard such issues except under those proposing such treatment.

Reply

PsychoHyena says:

12:36pm | 02/10/12

@P Walker, and Regressive Memory Loss has been thrown out by the majority of the medical profession. You sound like you're having similar issues to Elwyn but choosing to express those issues with anger. If you're happy with being cut then be happy, Elwyn isn't attacking you, he's raising an issue that a lot of men have started protesting.

Dr. Richard L. Matteoli says:

12:29pm | 02/10/12

This is not a Regressive Memory Loss issue. The condition is obvious to the sight. Regrowing the foreskin has been around since the Greeks ruled Judea and more likely than not even before that.

Dr. Richard L. Matteoli says:

12:43pm | 02/10/12

This is not a Regressive Memory Loss issue. The condition is obvious to the sight. Regrowing the foreskin has been around since the Greeks ruled Judea and more likely than not even before that.

grant says:

12:28pm | 02/10/12

Just doing a cursory look at some information.

Circumcision

Reduces the change of:

- Urinary tract infections
- Cancers
- Infection
- Chronic skin conditions

Can help prevent:

Human immunodeficiency virus

Human papillomavirus

Sexually transmitted infections

Improves:

Hygiene

There seems to be so much research on the positives of circumcision. Much like climate change, anti immunisation or fluoride in water.

So to me, it's starting to look like that the anti-circumcision comments here are not based on peer review studies, if they are please upload the links.

World Health Organization. 2007. http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2007/9789241596169_eng.pdf

American Academy of Family Physicians. 2007. <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/clinicalrecs/guidelines/Circumcision.html>.

"The Impact of Male Circumcision on HIV Transmission". *Journal of Urology* 183: 21-26

College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia, September 2009, <https://www.cpsbc.ca/files/u6/Circumcision-Infant-Male.pdf>,

Reply

Amy Rosenberg says:

12:57pm | 02/10/12

For those of you reading Grant's "cursory look at some information." It's not a cursory look at information. It's selected very carefully to only be the cherry picked pro-circumcision info. He is not doing a cursory look. He has been collecting these links and info for a long time. I have read enough message boards to recognize someone who is very good at crafting these specific and highly selective references. In my experience, they are generally people who are involved in circumcision fetishism, and get sexual enjoyment from the sadism of the children being circumcised. I can't say if that is where he is coming from, but the fetish sites read the same... putting up a lot of these selective links, and not looking at the information in a broad and truly scientific way. If you would like to do actual research, I am sure a true "cursory look" would include the accurate and research based information of: wholenetwork.org, drmomma.org, intactamerica.org, a great "primer" at <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/moral-landscapes/201109/myths-about-circumcision-you-likely-believe> and others.

Don't be fooled.

LC says:

01:14pm | 02/10/12

Save the HIV study, these are based on what's known as advocacy research. They come up with a pre-determined point-of-view, and set out to prove it, dismissing evidence which does not fit in. They are not approaching these things with an open mind, as researches should. Papers like this would get laughed into the bin when peer-review time came.

For example, the HIV study, though most were shut down on ethical reasons because (surprise surprise) PEOPLE WERE GETTING HIV, one of them showed a difference of 50% in favour of circumcised men. Sounds all well and good at first glance, but it does not pass closer inspection. The difference was between 4.8% and 2.4%. Indeed a difference of 50%, but if you're that worried about a 4.8% chance to get HIV you seriously cannot convince me you wouldn't be worried about a 2.4% chance. Furthermore, this only covers female-to-male transmission during vaginal sex. IT totally disregards other forms of sex, not to mention male-to-female transmissions. These are gaping holes in the research, and papers with issues even half as serious are dismissed by major scientific journals.

LC says:

01:55pm | 02/10/12

Oops...scratch "Save the HIV study".

grant says:

01:56pm | 02/10/12

@ Amy

This issue appears to evoke a lot of emotion from a lot of different people. Which makes it hard to argue rationally.

Amy, I am not a secret 'pro-circumcision' campaigner.

I am a lay person with no particular vested interest in this subject; besides being circumcised myself.

Those links I quoted were from Wikipedia. I Googled circumcision earlier today, I only included those four because they come from reputable non-partisan medical organisations.

- World Health Organization
- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia
- American Academy of Family Physicians

When I first looked up this information I found that there appears to be a general consensus amongst the medical community, which is that circumcision is beneficial.

To be surer, I quickly read the executive summaries and some of the information in those peer reviewed research papers. These indicate that there is a general consensus amongst medical practitioners that circumcision provides substantial health benefits. If the information stated otherwise, I would argue against circumcision, but the majority of health professionals simply do not support that assertion.

Your comment about sadism and fetishism is a disgrace, and only discredits yourself. Why would you make such grave and fictitious claim about my character, just because I don't agree with you?

You should be arguing this issue.

Elwyn Moir says:

03:46pm | 02/10/12

As for the non-partisan World Health Organisation, I have often wondered if they are aware that their chief advisor on circumcision happens to have invented the Accucirc device they also promote for accomplishing these remote African circumcisions http://www.circleaks.org/index.php?title=World_Health_Organization

Dr. Richard L. Matteoli says:

03:55pm | 02/10/12

@ Grant: Don't believe you. Amy's got you pegged. If she does not have you pegged, then I agree with you - all you did was cursory and amounts to nothing useful to an academic discussion.

Your sources are academic jokes.

Wikipedia circumcision articles are under Jake Waskett of the Gilgal Society that uses circumcision for eroticism.

Retired US Army General Wiswell who did the UTI studies is associated, So too some who have done the WHO studies.

Tim says:

03:56pm | 02/10/12

Grant,

did you actually read the links you posted?

"When I first looked up this information I found that there appears to be a general consensus amongst the medical community, which is that circumcision is beneficial."

Even in your links (which are very selective), opinion is divided. How could you possibly call this consensus?

Ron Low says:

12:41pm | 02/10/12

Foreskin - even restored foreskin - feels REALLY good.

Reply

Amy Rosenberg says:

12:45pm | 02/10/12

Thanks for this extremely well written and informative article. It is so valuable to hear people's personal experiences, instead of just a sea of statistics. These are real people's lives that are being affected, and people tend to forget that... By bravely sharing your story, and putting yourself out there, you are helping to dispel the myths and misinformation that is so rampant about this issue. The people who claim "But I've never heard a man complain about his circumcision" are woefully uninformed about the facts, and articles such as yours show the truth of the situation. It is amazing to me how some people can respond to such a brave and helpful article by making pot-shots, and trivializing the severity of the issue. If people really think circumcision is such a trivial and unimportant issue, why don't they stop performing it? There really is no way to win with such people. If you don't speak up, they will say that no one

complains about it, and that if it were such a bad thing, people would be speaking up and telling their stories. But if you DO speak up, they don't listen. But enough about the uninformed or willfully ignorant responders.... There ARE people who are listening, and appreciating your brave testimony, and learning from your truth which you share here. Thank you!!!

Reply

Jade Connor says:

01:38pm | 02/10/12

Thanks for your story, Elwyn. You give another example of how damaging religion can sometimes be to our mental health. Conservative religious people think sexual organs are things to be 'cleaned up'. They also have a disregard for the importance of sex in our lives. We have evolved, as animals, no need to have sex; it's a physiological aspect of our bodies. Studies have shown that regular, fulfilling sex hugely decreases stress levels, and couples that don't have fulfilling sex often break up. These are surely just a few of the consequences of damaging a person's sex organs for life. The German court ruling last year hit the nail on the head.

Reply

Mark says:

02:15pm | 02/10/12

I am proud that you are speaking out about this. It is really important for people to hear about the harm circumcision causes the adult the child becomes. It is so unfortunate that some people try to trivialize the harm these men experience, to the point that these men are afraid to speak out. I commend you for your bravery. Circumcision of males really needs to be recognized as a form of assault, just like female circumcision already is. All people have the right to their bodies. Nobody has the right to cut off various parts without that person's consent. The foreskin is a healthy erogenous tissue that the child has the right to enjoy. After all, they were born with it.

Reply

James Loewen says:

02:18pm | 02/10/12

Thank you for speaking out so eloquently Elwyn. Cutting off part of a child's penis is abuse, causes varying degrees of physical and psychological harm.

Doubtful people can view this harm, or report it at the Global Survey of Circumcision Harm.

People speaking out will help end this abuse of children, and the adults they become.

Reply

Robert M says:

03:18pm | 02/10/12

Of course, little attention is paid to the places (e.g. South Africa, Lesotho and India) where the statistics show that circumcision makes it MORE likely that you will contract HIV.

Reply

David says:

04:07pm | 02/10/12

Thank you for this excellent, personal contribution to the conversation, Elwyn. As an uncircumcised man, I can't even imagine the trauma of having had part of your penis removed without your consent. I really am looking forward to the show tonight - I hope it debunks all the rubbish that people try to offer as reasoning for circumcision. There are 100 families a year who lose their new born babies to complications while undergoing unnecessary circumcisions - sure even just the THOUGHT of that happening is enough for people to rethink their position on this.

Many others have listed sound reasoning with regard to medical, hygiene, physiological concerns, but on the "I want him to look like his father" argument, I will say one thing: While my dad is circumcised, I am glad that he and my mother were not so narcissistic as to mutilate their first born son to conform with what was a much more prevalent practice in the 50's.

Best of luck with your restoration journey.

Reply

JM says:

04:32pm | 02/10/12

As a woman, an intact penis is so much sexier than a circumcised one. The head is so much glossier and plump and there is no scar line.

Reply

Scotchfinger says:

05:16pm | 02/10/12

OK, I accept having read all this that I have probably missed out a bit on the sensitivity stakes. But so what? Means I can last longer in the sack, so it's win-win for me and my wife 😊 All the non-circumcised blokes are probably 3-strokes-and-you're-out types.

Christy says:

04:50pm | 02/10/12

Thank you for sharing your story, Elwyn. My husband is also circumcised and hates it. He used to not know that he was missing anything until I began to read about it online and found out that most of his sensitivity was taken from him as a newborn. I also wish he was still genitally intact, and I'm sorry we can not enjoy sex as we should. Foreskin greatly enhances both the man and woman's pleasure during sex. He has talked about restoring, but the required effort involved is overwhelming. We are thankful our four sons have their whole penis to enjoy!

I would like to provide a link in response to Grant's links on the supposed benefits of male circumcision. This article cites the benefits for female circumcision, and they are quite similar. <http://islamqa.info/en/ref/45528>

There are no benefits to amputating a healthy body part. Only about 1 in 100,000 American men develop penile cancer. It would make far more sense to amputate breasts, as about 1 in 8 women develop breast cancer!!! And, of all the many body parts which can become infected, why single out the foreskin for a preventative amputation?! Females are far more likely to develop infections, yet they are given medicine.

If people would take off their cultural bias, they could see that what is done to boys here is just as bad as what is done to girls elsewhere. Healthy body parts should never be amputated from babies and children. Here is a great site to learn much more: <http://www.drmonma.org/2010/01/are-you-fully-informed.html>

Reply

Robert says:

05:56pm | 02/10/12

FFs, how about getting on with life and making do with what you have and be blessed you have 2 legs, 2 arms, 2 eyes, 2 ears and all your faculties!

Some people just analyse life to the nth degree and forget there are more pressing issues in life than when as a little boy you received a little snip and you have only ever been used to that yet you seem to sound like you are missing out on so much.

I am circumcised and have never felt inadequate, never pondered what could've been, never had a woman tell me I am a fraction of who I could be, never looked at other men and saw myself as different and strange and certainly never had an inadequate sex life simply because I have less skin on my penis.

Pardon the pun but get a grip on life and stop complaining and enjoy life and the freedom you enjoy.

Many many children don't get a fraction of the time you have spent in this world, many unfortunately die of cancer, starvation, physical and mental abuse and many more are homeless, parentless, struggle to clothe themselves and struggle every day to get the nourishment they need to survive with many children in Africa and other parts of the world sometimes eating 1 or 2 meals a week!!

Reply

Elwyn Moir says:

07:26pm | 02/10/12

Robert, life as we know it is so good precisely BECAUSE people have stood up and said "we need to re-examine issue X because improvement can be made", and that progress was made despite resistant "but it was good enough for me" attitude you outline here. I won't say "get a grip", but perhaps "lets use what we have to let us consider moral issues carefully".