

Department of Urology

Patient Information Sheet

Circumcision

The surgical removal of the foreskin

This procedure involves the cutting away of the foreskin (the skin covering the end of the penis). The end of the penis (glans) will thereafter be permanently exposed.

Occasionally a biopsy or removal of an abnormal area of tissue from the glans may be performed (if necessary) at the same time, if performed under a full general anaesthetic.

This information sheet was developed and agreed by our Urology Team. Information within this sheet was obtained from various sources including; the Urology Team, the British Association of Urological Surgeons, other NHS Trusts and Department of Health Websites.

What are the intended benefits of this procedure?

To treat foreskin abnormality, tightness or infections.

What are the alternatives to this procedure?

Drugs to treat inflammation, leave uncircumcised, dorsal slit.

What are the most frequently occurring events or serious risks of this procedure?

Common (greater than 1 in 10)

- Swelling of the penis lasting several days

Occasional (between 1 in 10 and 1 in 50)

- Heavy bleeding of the wound site, requiring a further procedure
- Persistence of absorbable stitches, after the time which they should have dropped out, requiring removal of them
- Altered or reduced sensation over the head of the penis
- Wound infection requiring antibiotics

Rare (less than 1 in 50)

- Tenderness in the area of the scar, rarely long term
- You may not be completely cosmetically satisfied
- Altered or reduced sensation of the penis, which may be permanent
- Slight narrowing of the urethral opening

What sort of anaesthetic is used?

Local, spinal or general anaesthetic may be used. Your Consultant or Specialist Nurse will be able to give you further information on which anaesthetic you are likely to require.

What does the procedure involve?

Surgically cutting away the skin covering the end of the penis (ensuring that there is enough skin left to accommodate the length of erection you may have).

If this is being performed under a full anaesthetic, you will be assessed for your general health before the procedure at a 'Pre-Assessment' clinic and given all the information required to prepare you for an anaesthetic.

This procedure is often performed as a day-case and rarely requires a stay overnight in hospital unless you are alone or have other medical conditions.

What happens after the procedure?

If you are having this done as a day case, you will be allowed home as soon as you have passed water. You may pass some slightly bloodstained urine at first and this may also sting slightly.

The penis will look swollen and bruised. This can take between 2-4 weeks to recover. There will be some soreness but ordinary painkilling tablets will keep you comfortable. We will give you some when you leave hospital.

You should bath or shower every day, to keep the wound area clean (bath in plain water and do not soak in hot water for prolonged periods). You should leave the wound bare (do not apply creams, lotions or dressings). If you have a wound dressing in place – you may soak this off the day after your operation in the bath or shower.

You may find it more comfortable to wear supportive underwear but this is entirely your choice.

Avoid vigorous activity for 2 weeks, or until the wound has fully healed and avoid sexual intercourse for 4-6 weeks.

You can return to light work once you are comfortable (approximately 2-3 days) and manual or very physical activity after (approximately 2 weeks).

What else should I look out for?

If you develop a discharge from between the stitches, fever, increased bleeding or pain on urination you should contact your GP. If you are unable to pass urine at all, you should go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

Who should I contact for more information?

- Day Surgery Unit if your operation was carried out there
- **The Specialist Urology Nurses:**

Sue Sill & Chris Backhouse
020 8934 3547

Yvonne Haffenden, Lin Williams & Suzy Waight
Urodynamics - 020 8934 3038
- **The Urology Ward – Alexandra 020 8934 3152**
- Your Urology Consultant.