

Circumcision Recommended to Protect Women

by Joanna Shea, Medical Researcher



Circumcision is now considered a basic health necessity and should be performed on all infant boys. Based on multiple studies suggesting that male circumcision reduces the risk of STDs by 50 percent, U.S. health officials are encouraging routine circumcision for male infants at a time when circumcision rates are declining in the United States. Male circumcision protects both men and women from several sexually transmitted infections, according to studies in the New England Journal of Medicine. The research shows that this simple procedure has important medical

benefits and acts as a lifetime vaccine for a male and his female partner according to the World Health Organization.

Studies have shown that a woman who is in a sexual relationship with a circumcised man is 28 percent less likely to acquire cervical cancer than a woman who is with a man who is uncircumcised. This reduction in cervical cancer shows one of the medical benefits of circumcision. The reason that circumcision has been linked to reducing the risks of cervical cancer is that the procedure reduces the risk of contracting the Human Papillomavirus. It is this virus that can cause cervical cancer.

Anti-circumcision activists would have us believe that circumcised men's sexual pleasure (and that of the women they love) is compromised by this act of what they call 'genital mutilation'. Studies have shown that circumcision does not diminish sexual pleasure; in fact men circumcised as adults find sex to be much improved after they are circumcised.

Anti-circumcision groups, say that boys can be taught the good hygiene necessary to ensure that their foreskins don't harbor disease. As the mother of boys, I wouldn't entrust my sexual health to the grooming habits of young men. How can these anti-circumcision groups call this procedure not medically necessary, when studies have shown that this simple painless procedure performed on a baby can help reduce the chances of his future sexual partner acquiring cervical cancer. In fact over 80 percent of



Circumcision with local anaesthetic is a painless procedure for a baby boy.

adult males in the United States are currently circumcised.

Most physicians are now recommending all young girls have the HPV vaccine. The HPV vaccine is meant to protect against the Human Papillomavirus which causes genital warts and can lead to cervical cancer in a woman. So physicians are recommending this vaccine to help to prevent cervical cancer but why are they not making strong recommendations for all boys to be circumcised? After all circumcision reduces the risk of cervical cancer just like the vaccine does.

Why shouldn't both preventions be recommended by all physicians? Girls getting the HPV vaccine and boys getting circumcised?

A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 25 percent of American women aged 14-19 are infected with at least one of the four most common STDs. Eighteen percent of them have human papilloma virus (HPV), which can cause genital

warts and cervical cancer. Four percent have chlamydia, which, if left untreated, can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease and sterility. Circumcised males are much less likely to spread viruses between their female partners than are uncircumcised males.

Other studies have shown that circumcision can reduce a man's chances of contracting HIV by up to 60 percent. The reason circumcision helps to reduce a man's risk when it comes to HIV is that the foreskin has high concentration of immune system receptor cells within it for the HIV virus to attach to and cause infection. Circumcision removes all the excess skin that covers the glans of the penis. Infection is less likely in the circumcised male as a result of the physical changes that occur to the penis because the glans of the circumcised penis is left permanently exposed after circumcision. When the foreskin is removed the glans remains dry which reduces the risk because the penis no longer harbors bacteria and viruses between the glans and foreskin.



Smegma and bacteria on an uncircumcised penis with the foreskin pulled back

Circumcision drastically reduces the risk of catching the Human Papillomavirus. Since the penis is going to penetrate a woman's vagina, it's up to women to make sure their partner is circumcised or at least recommend wearing a condom during intercourse if he is uncircumcised.



Complete circumcision removes all the foreskin leaving the glans of the penis permanently exposed and dry.

Most cervical problems are caused by absence of male circumcision. Women are now expressing a strong preference for their pediatricians to circumcise their infant boys. Look at it this way, circumcision will reduce the risks of cervical cancer for his future partner and your future daughter in law. It is clearly shown that male circumcision is just as medically necessary as the HPV vaccine for

girls. The health benefits for women of having a circumcised partner have been sufficiently proven, and the medical benefits should outweigh any stigma against both adult and infant circumcision.

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The Circumcision Helpdesk™
London, United Kingdom

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