

Name of Operation: *Circumcision (removal of foreskin) for BXO****Main issues:***

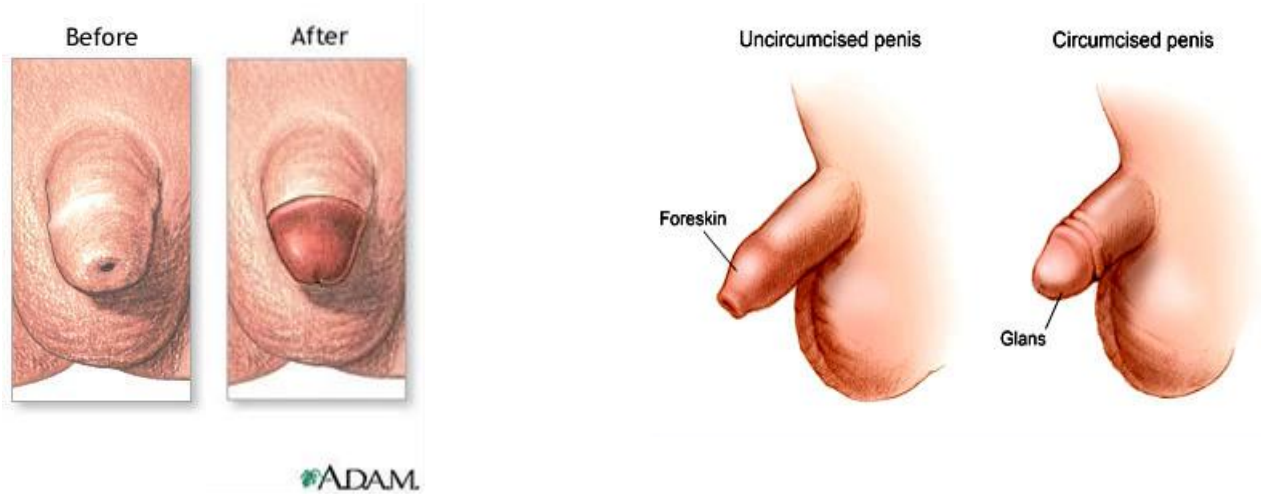
- Removal of the foreskin (the skin that covers the head of the penis) is usually only needed for BXO (balanitis xerotica obliterans, a skin-condition that causes scarring of the penis). While the operation removes the diseased foreskin, sometimes BXO can go on to cause problems to the head of the penis and to the pee-pipe, even several years later. We often recommend a steroid ointment after surgery to reduce this risk.
- Dissolving stitches (no need to remove).
- Penis may look very swollen, crusted, and bruised for several weeks. It may also be sore to pee for a while (regular pain-killers should help).

Intended benefits:

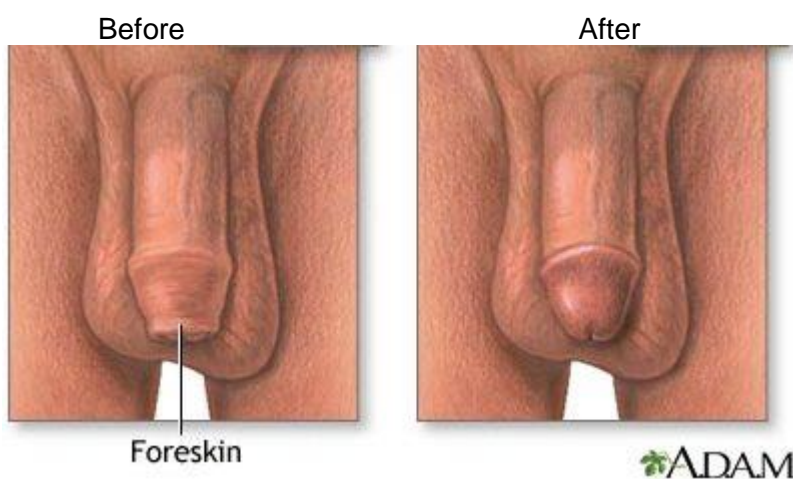
- Easier to pee, as the very tight foreskin has been removed.
- Easier sexual intercourse in later life, as the very tight foreskin has been removed.
- Removing the diseased foreskin may reduce the chance of BXO going on to cause nasty problems to the head of the penis and to the pee-pipe beneath.

Common or serious risks:

- Bleeding (rarely serious, but sometimes needs another operation to stop, and occasionally can be life-threatening in young children).
- Infection (rarely serious, but occasionally can be life-threatening in young children).
- Damage to penis or pee-pipe during the operation (this rarely happens but, if it does, it can be serious).
- The exposed head of the penis is more sensitive for several months, which the boy may just describe as “sore.” It is also more likely to be damaged by urine, clothing, etc, which can cause ulcers on the head of the penis or narrowing of the pee-pipe.
- In younger boys, removing the foreskin makes the penis look smaller. In some, this may be bad enough to make the penis appear “buried” under the surrounding skin.
- The final appearance of the skin or the scar may be less than ideal as it heals from the BXO skin condition: normally boys “grow into” any bagginess of the skin, so it would be unusual that further minor cosmetic surgery is needed for this in later life.
- The foreskin is the most sensitive part of the penis, so some experts think that removing it may reduce some of the pleasure of sexual intercourse in later life (for the man and/or his partner), although this is difficult to check scientifically.
- Anaesthetic problems (rarely serious, but around 1 in 250,000 general anaesthetics in children can be fatal).



Two “before and after” paired diagrams of how a circumcision affects the appearance of a boy’s penis, viewed from the front and from the side (the “glans” is the head of the penis that is normally hidden underneath the foreskin but which becomes visible after a circumcision).
(left-hand pair of pictures from www.adamimages.com/illustration/SearchResult/1/circumcision ; no longer able to find source of right-hand pair of pictures)



A “before and after” diagram of how circumcision affects the look of a grown man’s penis
(from www.adamimages.com/illustration/SearchResult/1/circumcision)