**Information for parents:**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has indicated that the health benefits of newborn male circumcision outweigh the risks and that the procedure’s benefits justify access to this procedure for families who choose it. The Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS) does not recommend routine circumcision of newborn boys but does indicate that ‘there may be a benefit of circumcision preventing urinary tract infections and some sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, in addition the procedure could be considered as a treatment to reduce disease’. The CPS emphasizes that physicians should provide unbiased medical information so that parents can weigh the benefits and risks.

Although existing scientific evidence demonstrates potential advantages and benefits to newborn male circumcision, there are also potential disadvantages and risks. It is legitimate for parents to take into account social, cultural, religious, and ethnic traditions, in addition to the medical factors when making this decision. To make an informed choice, parents of all male infants should be given accurate and unbiased information and be provided the opportunity to discuss this decision.

Advantages of newborn male circumcision include a reduced incidence of urinary tract infections, penile cancer, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Disadvantages include surgical complications related to the procedure (see next paragraph), and need for further procedures due to complications. Currently in Canada, about 35% of newborn males are circumcised.

Complications are infrequent; most are minor, and severe complications are very rare. Male circumcision performed during the newborn period has considerably lower complication rates than when performed later in life.

The incidence of complications after newborn circumcision is between 0.2 and 0.6%. The most frequent complication, excessive bleeding, is seen in 0.1%. Other complications include infection, recurrent phimosis, wound separation, concealed (buried) penis, unsatisfactory cosmesis because of excess skin removed, skin bridges, urinary retention, meatitis, meatal stenosis, chordee, and inclusion cysts. Case reports have been associated with such rare events as scalded skin syndrome, necrotizing infections, and meningitis as well as with major surgical problems such as urethral fistula, amputation of a portion of the glans penis, and penile necrosis and loss. Deaths due to circumcision, although exceedingly rare, have been described.

**If you have decided that you want your son circumcised:**

The procedure is done at the Ambulatory Procedures Unit (APU) at Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington on the second floor, south tower. Upon arrival, you will be asked to sign a consent form that authorizes me to circumcise your son. Please only sign this form if you are satisfied that we have had a complete discussion about this issue, and you are aware of the risks and benefits. If you have any additional concerns at any time, I will discuss these with you. It is best to have finished feeding your son 30 minutes before bringing him to the Ambulatorys Procedures Unit, so that your baby will not be overly hungry while you are waiting.

All the following steps are taken to ensure your son has minimal discomfort during the procedure. First, your son is given 0.5 ml of Infants’ Tempra or Tylenol (also called acetaminophen) (80 mg/ml) just before you leave home.Please do not give any other medication besides Tylenol or Tempra (i.e No Ibuprofen, Advil etc.) because it may increase the risk of bleeding. During the procedure, your son will be given a local anesthetic (freezing). This is administered through a very small needle at the base of the penis. This may result in a bruise, but is not likely to require any specific treatment. The procedure takes 10-15 minutes. I use a procedure called the gomco clamp technique. Following removal of the foreskin, the penis is wrapped in a Vaseline gauze dressing.

After the procedure, you may feed your son. You will need to wait at the hospital for up to 1 hour after the procedure. His penis and dressing will be checked by myself or one of the RNs. If there is no significant bleeding at that time your baby will be ready to go home. The gauze dressing is likely to fall off by the morning of the next day (or earlier). Once it does come off, you should apply Vaseline to the penis with each diaper change to prevent the penis from sticking to the diaper. Please check the diaper to ensure that there is no significant bleeding every 1-2 hours for the first 24 hours. If you have any concerns you should contact my office immediately, or if I am not available have your son assessed immediately in the emergency department of your nearest hospital. It is important to gently push the skin down off the head of the penis if it has moved up a little to ensure it heals properly just beneath the rim of the head. A Q-Tip with Vaseline is useful for this. Do not do any (gentle) pushing on the skin for the first two days as it will be swollen from the surgery. If you are unsure of the appearance of your son’s penis at any time, please contact my office.

**General care following the circumcision:**  
  
It is normal for your son to be a little irritable for the first 24 hours following the circumcision. Most babies like to nurse in a quiet environment following the circumcision. A baby who cries for more than a few minutes is usually fussy from air swallowed during the circumcision and needs to be burped. Most babies sleep quite well following the circumcision. Healing is promoted by keeping the area clean and dry. Warm water and a cotton-ball or washcloth are preferred for cleaning the area around the penis. Avoid moistened towelettes, alcohol, powders, and lotion since these may cause irritation. Disposable diapers are strongly recommended for the first week since they tend to be less irritating, and they help keep the area dryer and cleaner.  
  
Healing is usually rapid and occurs in several stages. Remember that a circumcision is like any other cut. There are many factors that influence healing; but most importantly, every child heals differently. First, the cut edge seals and bleeding ceases within minutes, hours, or even over the course of an entire day. The area just beneath the glans (head) will become swollen. This swelling will subside within a week or two. In the first two days, there may be an off-white or yellowish, patchy appearance of the glans. These patches are a type of scab and are associated with normal healing. You will also notice that the glans appears red and glossy sometimes purple. This is because the skin covering the glans of an uncircumcised penis is mucous membrane (like the skin inside your cheek). Once exposed, the mucous membrane will toughen (or keratinize), and, in time, take on a normal appearance. It takes about a month for the penis to take on a normal, healed appearance. After a few days to week, some parents notice swelling of the mucosal tissue behind or under the head of the penis and believe it looks “like a blister”. This type of swelling is normal. It is not a blister, and it will gradually subside.  
  
The Ministry of Health in Ontario considers newborn circumcision to be a cosmetic procedure and as such you are responsible for the cost. The surgeon’s fee for the procedure is $150.00. The hospital fee is $200.00. An invoice for the surgeon’s fee will be given to you during your pre-procedure visit in my office (payable cash or cheque). Due to rare cancellations on day of procedure we have instituted the policy that - If payment in full of the surgeon’s fee is not received by my office within 48 hours of the procedure, we will cancel your appointment for the procedure. Please be prepared to pay the balance of $200.00 at the hospital business office on the day of the procedure.

**\*\*\* You must complete this sheet and give to reception at my office prior to booking your son’s neonatal circumcision procedure**

**Questionnaire: Please circle: (True or False)**

1. I have read the neonatal circumcision information sheets, and all my questions **T F**

have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. Complications due to neonatal circumcision can include excessive **T F**

bleeding, cosmetic abnormalities, and other rare complications.

3. Although there are advantages and benefits to neonatal circumcision, there are **T F**

also disadvantages and risks. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

feels that the health benefits of newborn male circumcision outweigh

the risks and that the procedure’s benefits justify access to this procedure

for families who choose it. At present, the Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS)

has indicated that there are no medical indications for circumcision in the

neonatal period.

**Consent to a neonatal circumcision procedure:**

I authorize a neonatal circumcision on my son to be performed by Dr. Sowery or other doctor approved by him. I further authorize any additional operative and/or diagnostic procedure that may be found to be necessary during the course of this procedure. I have read the neonatal circumcision information sheet and questionnaire (3 pages in total) and I am aware of the risks, reason for doing this procedure and potential complications.

Signature of Substitute Decision Maker (SDM)/Parent Print Name Date