

Religious

- The Torah's Command: Genesis 17:10-12
 - (10) Such shall be the covenant between Me and you and your offspring to follow which you shall keep: every male among you shall be circumcised.
 - (11) You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and that shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you.
 - (12) And throughout the generations, every male among you shall be circumcised at the age of **eight days**.
- Judaism is a religion of action, not faith.
 - Brit Milah is a command
 - The procedure is required for all healthy male Jewish babies
- The eighth day is fundamental for the commandment
 - To eradicate the ability to do it at eight days (on a communal level) makes it a medical procedure and not a religious rite.
- History:
 - 4,000-year-old unbroken tradition
 - Until recently this was an accepted practice in most communities
 - All major religions support this practice
 - Church of Sweden has come out in support of circumcision
- Rate of Circumcision
 - Over 90% of Jews have a Brit Milah performed for their son
 - This statistic applies to religious and non-religious
- National identity marker
 - The rite symbolized our covenant with God
- A child who is not circumcised
 - Can't be called to the Torah
 - Can't become a Bar Mitzvah
- Values
 - We impart our values from the first moment of life
 - Passed from generation to generation
 - Where do the attacks on religious freedom end? Is education next?
- Spiritual Vaccination
 - Just like vaccines, we have to make decisions for our children

Medical

- Mohelim highly educated
 - Education is conducted through an apprenticeship or schools
 - Learn technicals of Milah
 - Learn about all medical issues related to the procedure
 - Every Brit Milah is done in consort with medical professionals
- Sterilization
 - All tools are sterilized in an autoclave between each usage
 - Eradicates 100% of germs
 - Gloves (latex/surgical) are used during the procedure
- Pain
 - Emla (5% lidocaine)- topical cream is applied 1 hour before
 - Sugar water is given 1 minute before the procedure begins
 - similar to all shots/blood drawing in hospitals
 - According to Dr. Avraham Shteinberg, a combination of sugar water & topical lidocaine is the best thing to give to an 8-day old child
 - When done in our method, the procedure lasts a total of 30-second
 - The baby usually calms down immediately
 - All tools must be as sharp as possible.
 - Novocaine- “how much pain do you want to have no pain”
 - Administering it can take longer than the actual procedure itself
 - Injecting additional liquid in the area swells the skin and can make it harder to cut in the proper location
- Benefits
 - Benefits outweigh the risks 100:1
 - There is a greater statistical probability of having a complication with the foreskin later in life than there is of a complication with the procedure as a neonate.
 - The risk of a significant circumcision complication is between 1 in 250 (World Health Organization) and 1 in 500 (American Academy of Pediatrics)
 - The risk of a significant foreskin complication is 1 in 20.
([Sneppen-Thorup study of foreskin morbidity in Denmark](#), 2016)
 - Removal of the foreskin reduces:
 - UTIs
 - HIV (60%)
 - Syphilis
 - Penile Cancer
 - Cervical Cancer

- Almost 7,000 babies in the United States **die** of Sepsis each year
 - UTI is one of the leading causes of sepsis.
- By contrast, death from circumcision by a trained professional is **EXTREMELY RARE**. A baby is far more likely to die from NOT being circumcised.
- Neonatal is the best time for circumcision
 - Rate of complications- 2-6 per 1000
 - Ages 1-9: rate of complication increases 20 times
 - Ages 10+: increases 10 times
 - Much more serious a procedure at an older age
 - Circumcision as an adult
 - Recovery is longer and more complicated
 - The individual remembers the procedure
- Anti-circumcision Misinformation
 - 20,000 nerve endings lost with the removal of the foreskin
 - More like 1900 nerve endings
 - Most are fine-touch nerve endings (don't produce sexual pleasure)
 - Psychological Effects
 - Biased/small sample size
 - Those who make this claim base it on a procedure which lasts 5-36 mins (as can happen with doctors)
 - CDC- there is no evidence of psychological damage
 - 16 functions of the foreskin
 - Protects from sunburn
 - Protects from frostbite
 - None of the proposed benefits are based on scientific research
 - The research they quote
 - Biased- conducted by anti-circumcisionists
 - Control groups are too small

Ethics

- Humanitarian Argument
 - Humane- this is the “science” of our time. If you’ve violated these statutes then you are no longer worthy of living.
 - During the time of Nazi Germany, the science was genetics
 - Claim: circumcision is a violation of the child’s bodily autonomy
 - Are they against ear piercing? Cleft lip?
 - Choosing not to circumcise one’s baby is also a decision
 - You’ve decided to make the only option for the child a much more

complicated procedure as an adult

- Greatly increased the likelihood of complications
 - Increased the potential for disease transfer and contraction
 - In the Jewish/Muslim communities, the parents have chosen to make their children different from all other male members.
 - Goal anti-circumcision movement- Most likely when the children become adults, they will choose not to do it
 - More information [here](#)
- Female Genital Mutilation
 - Intent of the ritual:
 - The woman will no longer feel pleasure
 - She will remain subservient to her husband
 - The Brit Milah is intended to elevate the boy to full status in the Jewish community
 - There is no intent nor evidence of a loss of sensation
 - Rambam who discusses sensation loss does so in the Moreh Nevuchim which means he is making a homiletical point, not a medical one.
 - FGM is carried out in a non-sterile environment
 - According to Jewish religious law, ritual circumcisers must carry out the procedure in the most sterile way possible, adhering to all modern medical standards
 - Also must be done as painlessly as possible (sharpest blade possible)
 - FGM leaves mental scarring
 - Similar to adult circumcision
- Sexual Potential has been robbed from the adult male
 - There is no evidence for this
 - Only people who know are adults who've been circumcised
 - There are studies that suggest that there is an increase in sexual satisfaction and ease in reaching orgasm
 - Members believe lies
 - Sexual potential lost
 - There are other ways to correct phimosis
 - Contrary to all medical advice
 - Suicides- The group's members seem to have a tendency for depression.
 - Chicken and egg- were members feeling these things or did the group convince them they were missing something?
 - Obsessed with sex and sexual pleasure
 - Sexual Function
 - [Direct relationship](#) to how one feels about their circumcision
 - If negative- negatively impacts sexual function

- Attacks of the anti-circumcision movement on Jews/mohel
 - Pedophiles
 - Child molesters
 - Rapists

Have you been to a Bris?

- Please come! We'd love to have you
- It's a joyous occasion

Resources

- <https://jfst.se/judendom-judar/fakta-om-omskaerelse-brit-mila>
- www.circumcisionchoice.com
- <http://circfacts.org>
- <http://www.circinfo.net>
- <https://www.sepsis.org/sepsisand/children>