

Circumcision

Post operative information for parents and care givers.

A circumcision is a surgical procedure that involves removing the foreskin (skin covering the tip of the penis).

Post Operatively

Some children may be distressed and upset when they return from theatre. This can be normal after an anaesthetic and they should settle after a short time. If your son returns to the ward upset, it is important that you comfort him and keep him safe from hurting himself.

The nurse will monitor your son closely after the operation by taking his pulse rate, checking his breathing and assessing his pain.

Sometimes the surgeon will put a dressing around the circumcised penis and there may be a small amount of blood around the penis or on the dressing after the operation which is normal. The nurse will check your son's penis regularly until you go home.

Your son will need to stay in the ward for a minimum of two hours, sometimes longer depending on their recovery. He must be fully awake, eating and drinking before going home.

Pain management

Your child will be given pain relief during their surgery and should be comfortable when they return from theatre. Please speak to your nurse if you feel that your child is in pain.

If your child has had a caudal epidural for pain management (local anaesthetic into the spine), he will need close supervision as he may be unsteady on his legs for a while and require assistance when walking. Your son may feel pins and needles in his legs and lower half of his body as the local anaesthetic wears off. This should take approximately 4-6 hours.

On discharge the nursing staff will give you a pain management pamphlet regarding pain relief at home.

Eating and drinking

Your child can usually start drinking as soon as they are fully awake after surgery. When drinking well, they will be able to start eating a light diet. Please check with your nurse before giving your child anything to eat or drink. Babies can breast feed or bottle feed immediately.

Some children may experience some nausea and vomiting after surgery. Please tell your nurse if your child feels nauseous or vomits.

There is no need for a special diet after this surgery but it is recommended that your son avoids fatty or junk food for approximately 24 hours after surgery.

At home

Pain relief

Paracetamol may be given every 4-6 hours for 2 days after surgery if required. Please refer to the paracetamol bottle for the correct dose for your child.

Nausea and vomiting

After day surgery, do not be concerned if your son vomits once or twice after leaving hospital.

If they vomit or feel sick, stop giving them food for about an hour, then try giving them a drink, followed by a light diet. They can then have as much as they can manage without feeling sick.

If your child keeps vomiting, please seek medical attention by either calling your child's private surgeon or going to your nearest emergency department.

Wound care

Sometimes the surgeon will put a dressing around the circumcised penis which will usually fall off by itself or whilst in the bath.

Sutures (stitches) used in surgery are dissolvable and will not require removal.

There may be some crusting along the suture line for a few days after the operation and some bruising and swelling on the shaft of the penis can be expected for up to a week. A slight clear ooze is normal for the first 1-2 days. These symptoms are normal but if you become concerned, please seek medical advice.

To prevent your sons penis from sticking to his underwear/nappy, we suggest that you apply Vaseline to the front of nappy or underwear (not directly to the penis) to prevent the material from sticking.

You may also be prescribed some ointment to apply to your son's penis depending on the extent of the surgery performed.

Wound care

Observe the wound for general signs of infection. These include heat to the site, pus/ooze, foul smell, swelling, redness, fever or pain. If signs of infection are noticed, seek medical attention.

Bleeding

If bleeding occurs, sit your son down and apply firm, steady pressure to the area for 10 minutes with gauze or a clean cloth. Take the pressure off after 10 minutes and continue to watch the wound closely over the next 24 hours. If bleeding persists, apply pressure and seek immediate medical attention.

Bathing

You can bath/shower your son as normal 24 hours after surgery unless advised otherwise.

Follow up

There is usually no follow up appointment following a circumcision but if you are concerned or if your child is having problems, please contact your private surgeon or see your General Practitioner/ family doctor.

Adapted from

Circumcision, Women's and Children's Hospital: Adelaide

For more information

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This document has been reviewed and endorsed by consumers.