

Intact America

Children's Rights

<https://www.intactamerica.org/setting-the-record-straight/>

Campaign and Advocacy

Changing the circumcision status quo is always challenging, but growing awareness and open discussion are the best ingredients in the recipe for change. Below are some common justifications for male genital cutting followed by the truth that, thanks to Intact America and the intactivist movement, is now changing the way America thinks about circumcision.

This is an example of cultural bias at work. Americans preference for the surgically modified penis is a fashion, a self-perpetuating fad. Thanks to the work of Intact America, Americans are coming to appreciate the form and function of the natural, intact penis. As more and more babies are kept intact, and with ever-increasing international travel and exposure to other cultures where intact penises are the norm, boys and men with foreskins are becoming more common and accepted in America.

The male foreskin is no dirtier or smellier than a womans genitals. Regular bathingnot the amputation of the offending body partis the solution. As Georganne Chapin says, If a boy can grow up to become a master carpenter or a nuclear physicist, a high school teacher or a concert violinist, he can certainly be taught to wash his penis. As Americans change the way they think about the male body, being intact is on its way to becoming the new norm.

This commonly heard retort is straight out of a textbook about logic. It is a fallacy called [Appeal to Worse Problems](#). What the person is trying to do is dismiss your activism (probably because they are uncomfortable with it) by trying to make you feel insignificant. The reality is that there are many problems in the world and there are many people, too, so we can work on more than just a few problems at a time. Besides, and this is important, no one gets involved in an issue for purely altruistic or intellectual reasons. They get involved because they have an emotional stake in the issue. No complainer has the right to tell you what to do or how to feel. Which is why changing the circumcision status quo is so important.

No medical association in the world recommends circumcision (male genital cutting). Both the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics call infant circumcision elective in other words, not medically necessary. The American Academy of Pediatrics [states](#): Existing scientific evidence is not sufficient to recommend routine circumcision.

History books and medical museums are filled with examples of strange treatments and devices employed by doctors in misguided efforts to cure patients of real or imaginary ailments. To make matters worse, physicians have become self-declared experts regarding many non-medical issues in child-rearing, weighing in on co-sleeping, bedwetting, breastfeeding, toilet training, and spanking. Thankfully, with the abundance of information and people-to-people communication taking place in person and online, ordinary people now realize that doctors are NOT experts on all things having to do with the human body. Parents should have the confidence to follow their instincts when it comes to protecting their babies and children from painful and unnecessary medical procedures.

The rationales for male genital cutting closely parallel those for female genital cutting: its traditional, its cleaner, it prevents disease, and it lowers sexual libido. The reality is that cutting a childs genitalsregardless of their sex or agedoes nothing except cause them pain and trauma and diminish their full sexual experience.

Many people believe that parents should be free to make any decision for their children whatsoever. However, there ARE limits to parental decision-making, and many of these are inscribed in law. For example, it is illegal to tattoo a child (regardless of parental consent). While spanking was once accepted, it is increasingly disapproved of, and some jurisdictions have outlawed it altogether. Parents cannot force their children to go to work instead of going to school. And parents cannot neglect or have sexual relations with their sons and daughters.

Circumcisionamputation of the healthy, normal foreskinoccupies a strange place in American medicine in that it violates the norms of law and medical ethics, but because of the power of religion and the medical establishment, it is allowed to continue with *de facto* legal status so long as a childs parents consent to it. There is growing recognition that this exception makes no sense and violates childrens basic human rights.

That is good news for you, but not everybody feels that way. And how can you really know if you are fine? You probably dont know what it was like to have a working foreskin. Besides, wouldnt you have rather been able to make that choice for yourself? Dont be fooled. Circumcised and uncircumcised (intact) penises are not equal in appearance, function, or sexual pleasure.

Theres a groundswell of protest among genitally cut men (and their partners) who are recognizing the permanent damage that was done to their bodies without their consent. If you dont believe it, check out the hundreds of intactivist websites and the thousands of conversations taking place on social media. Youll see that [men are speaking out](#), and that fathers are expressing their regrets about having allowed their sons genitals to be cut.

And tens of thousands of men are restoring their foreskin using stretching techniques that require years of effort, which can be construed as a grievance.

Youll also hear from regret moms who were coerced or misled into thinking that circumcising their babies was either necessary or benign, and are now having trouble forgiving themselves. What you are not seeing is the army of men and women out there who are

making a commitment to see that future boys are spared this harm.