

and wetness on the site. The area is kept free of urine and stool and cleansed daily with water if needed. Parents are instructed regarding stump deterioration and proper umbilical care. The stump deteriorates through the process of dry gangrene. Cord separation time is influenced by a number of factors, including the type of cord care, type of delivery, and other perinatal events. The average cord separation time is 5 to 15 days. It takes a few more weeks for the cord base to heal completely after cord separation. During this time, care consists of keeping the base clean and dry and observing for any signs of infection.

## **Circumcision**

Circumcision, the surgical removal of the foreskin on the glans penis, is usually done in the hospital, although it is not a common practice in most countries. In the United States, however, between approximately 40% and 70% of newborn boys are circumcised, depending on the region ([Owings, Uddin, Williams, et al, 2013](#)). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics reports that the overall national rate of newborn circumcision has fallen from 64.5% of newborns in 1979 to 58.3% of newborns in 2010 ([Owings, Uddin, Williams, et al, 2013](#)). Despite the frequency of the procedure in the United States, there is controversy regarding the benefits and risks ([Box 7-4](#)).

### **Box 7-4**

## **Risks and Benefits of Neonatal Circumcision**

### **Risks**

Complications:

- Hemorrhage
- Infection
- Meatitis (from loss of protective foreskin)