Circumcision means to surgically remove the foreskin, the ring of skin that covers the head of the penis. This procedure is usually done after the baby has been examined by the pediatrician, urinated, and written consent from the parents has been obtained. We perform circumcisions before you leave the hospital. You will need to request for this procedure to be done since it is not a required surgery.

Religious Beliefs and Trends:

Followers of the Jewish and Moslem faiths perform circumcision for religious reasons. Nonreligious circumcision became popular in English-speaking countries between 1920 and 1950 because it was thought that circumcision might help prevent sexually transmitted diseases. (Unsure). Circumcision never became a common practice in Asia, South America, Central America, or most of Europe.

Over 80 percent of the world’s male population is not circumcised. The circumcision rates have fallen to 1 percent of newborn males in Britain, 10 percent in New Zealand, and 40 percent in Canada. In the U.S., 60 percent of American newborn males were circumcised in 1986, whereas 90 percent were circumcised in 1979.

Cancer Prevention:

There is no firm evidence that circumcision offers protection against prostate cancer later in life. Circumcision does prevent cancers of the penis but the same preventative effect can be obtained by good hygiene with soap and water. In uncircumcised men, the foreskin sheds cells that collect and can lead to odor or infection if not cleaned. The sloughed cells build up or smegma build up is thought to contain a carcinogen (cancer agent). It will be important for parents to teach uncircumcised boys to clean the penis during the bath.

Infection Prevention:

Circumcision may protect against urinary tract infections during the first year of life. The chance of an infection however is only 1%. Posthitis (infection under the foreskin) and Phimosis (persistent tight foreskin) occur very rarely. Most boys’ foreskin will retract by age 3.

Culture and Tradition:

Whether the boy’s father or brother is circumcised may or may not influence your decision. In today’s world your boy will likely be in a locker room with both circumcised and uncircumcised boys.

In the final analysis, nonreligious circumcision is mainly cosmetic surgery with possible benefits and risks.
Risks of Circumcision:

Like any surgical procedure, circumcision may cause complications (in less than 1 per 100 circumcisions). Complications that might occur are skin infections, blood stream infections, bleeding, gangrene, scarring, and various surgical accidents. A recent study showed that 1 of every 500 circumcised newborns suffered a serious side effect.

You may have to pay for the procedure yourself because many medical insurance companies do not cover the cost of this procedure.

In addition, the procedure itself causes pain. If you ever think you will want a male circumcision, it is best done as a newborn to minimize discomfort as compared to an older child or adult circumcision.

The Procedure:

Your baby will be secure in a tray and the penile area cleaned with a sterilizing liquid. The type of instrument used to perform the circumcision varies with the surgeon’s preference and is individualized. Our routine practice is to give oral “sweeties” just before the procedure and to give a local block with lidocaine. In our personal experience, over half of our babies do not cry during the procedure.

For the first 24 to 48 hours after circumcision, we recommend keeping the area clean with plain water, particularly if soiled, and cover the surgical edge with petroleum jelly on a 4x4 gauze to prevent sticking to the diaper. The rubbing may cause bleeding. You can use Neosporin Ointment instead of the petroleum jelly for the three (3) times a day once you are home to speed up healing for the first 5 days if desired. There is a low risk of allergic reactions.

The procedure itself takes up to 5 minutes. During this time your baby may cry and may vomit. Therefore he should not be fed for at least two (2) hours before the procedure if bottlefed only.

Certain conditions may preclude or delay a circumcision. (prematurity, distress at birth, bleeding problems, or malformations of the genital area.)

Call Our Office Immediately If:
(The following statements apply to recent circumcisions.)
• The urine comes out in dribbles or the stream is weak.
• The head of the penis is blue or black.
• The incision line bleeds more than few drops and does not stop with pressure.
• The normal skin of the penis is red and tender.
• Any pus is present.
• Your baby’s rectal temperature is over 100 degree F (37.8 degrees C) or less than 97.5 degrees F (36.8 degrees C).
• Your baby is acting sick.
• The circumcision looks abnormal to you.
• The Plastibell ring does not fall off with 14 days. (note: It can’t fall off too early)
• You have other concerns or questions.