

Ethics Reflection on non-therapeutic circumcision of male minors

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Abstract

Male circumcision is a contentious topic in surgical practice. However, there are definite surgical justifications for the procedure. We place focus on 'The Non-Therapeutic Circumcision of male minors' document that outlines the position of KNMG endorsed by its Federation's Board from 2010. In many countries, the present legal position and medical ethics of regular or religious penile circumcision of adolescents are still a source of contention.

We aim to look for patterns inside the United States of America and international health ethics and legislation, to discover a move towards cohesive criteria for determining the admissibility of surgical intervention modifying the genital area of otherwise healthy young males before they are able to meaningfully engage in the course of action.

Introduction

What Is Non-Therapeutic Circumcision? Male minor and infant boy non-therapeutic circumcision is a prevalent type of iatrogenic damage caused by the removal of tissue beyond the foreskin in neonatal circumcision. [2] Circumcision has been practiced for ages in many different cultures for a variety of reasons. Every year, an estimated 13 million boys are circumcised globally, with the yearly amount in the Netherlands estimated at ten to fifteen thousand. [3] This tissue has recognized erogenous, protective, and immunological qualities, regardless of whether the procedure causes difficulties.

Circumcision affects around 25-33% of the world's male population. [4,5,6,7] Until recently, the attitude toward circumcision was rather tolerant, and circumcision was justified by citing religious freedom and purported medical advantages. The attitude about circumcision appears to have shifted in recent years. This is most likely a product of the discussion over female genital mutilation (FGM). [8] With the universal condemnation of this practice, especially its non-mutilating, symbolic version, the topic of why circumcision should be considered differently from FGM emerges often. [9]

Reasoning

What are the reasons for circumcision? The common justified circumcision opinions are for medical, preventative and therapeutic reasons.

Medical

Circumcision is an acknowledged medical treatment for a number of ailments, including but not limited to abnormal tightness of the foreskin known as phimosis and balanitis, or inflammation of the glans [10,11]. There is controversy in the medical community about whether circumcision is given to children too frequently for medical, preventative and therapeutic reasons.

Preventative

Circumcision was once used to prevent and treat a wide range of diseases, including gout, syphilis, epilepsy, migraines, arthrosis, alcoholism, groin hernias, asthma, poor digestion, eczema, and excessive masturbation. [11,12] Both the circumcised and uncircumcised penis can be impacted by several types of eczema. Certain types of eczema, including those that might affect the penis, can be caused by

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environmental triggers such soaps, detergents, or allergens such as pollen or animal dander. Atopic dermatitis, seborrheic dermatitis, and contact dermatitis are the three primary kinds of eczema that can damage the skin of the penis. These types of dermatitis are regarded as endogenous types of the illness since they develop as a result of internal factors as opposed to external irritants or triggers. [13]

Circumcision appears to minimize the risk of HIV/AIDS, according to studies released in recent decades [14], however other investigations dispute this evidence. [15] Furthermore, the HIV prevention research was conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa, where heterosexual contact is the primary mode of transmission. [16]. Gay sexual interaction and the use of tainted needles are far more common causes of HIV transmission. [17]

Therapeutic

These medical reasons are controversial due to opinions that there are occasionally better treatment options such as cosmetic surgery or local administration of a steroid cream, for example to treat phimosis [18,19]. A steroid cream like Hydrocortisone is safe to use on the foreskin and genital area for short periods of time. However, it's important to note that topical steroid creams like Hydrocortisone used for long periods of time can cause sensitivity and discomfort to worsen due to its unfortunate skin thinning side effects. [20]

What are the ethical issues with male circumcision?

The astounding issue currently facing British doctors on this issue, both currently and for numerous centuries, has been whether or not performing NPC on healthy, non-consenting (because unable to give consent) children and adolescents on such caregiver proposal is congruent with modern clinical ethics and the child's best interests. [21]

Three Circumcision Types

The three modern types of circumcision that are most prevalent are: excision, dorsal slit and shield and clamp. [22,23] The differences between each technique are as followed:

Excision

The inner foreskin is stretched over the head of the penis, and a radial cut is created from around shaft, generally proximal to the corona, as far backward as the scarring boundary. The prepuce is reapplied to conceal the glans, and a second circular cut is established around the shaft in the exact location as the initial one. The flesh flap is eliminated by making a transverse slit between the two circular ones. After that, the open bare corners are able to bind. The inner foreskin can be cut as part of the primary incision or independently if desired. The glans and frenulum are still not guarded in any way, and they must be avoided at all costs.[24,25]

Dorsal Slit

In the dorsal slit method, the prepuce is entirely contracted and a metal ring is put over the head of the penis. The inner foreskin is removed from the head of the penis without scarring, and a vertical slicing from both strata of the prepuce is performed with the help of arterial. The prepuce is subsequently rebuilt over this, which is made easier by that of the dorsal slit. [24,25]

Shield And Clamp

The Shield and clamp method uses a gadget to perform circumcision, eliminating the need for a knife in the majority of situations. In recent years, the device approach has become the most popular way of circumcision.[25]

Conclusion - Is child circumcision ethical?

Male minors' non-therapeutic circumcision violates children's right to autonomy and bodily integrity; therefore, circumcision is not justified except on medical/therapeutic reasons, in part because of the problems that might occur during or after circumcision. Non-therapeutic circumcision of male minors violates medical policy that minors may only be subjected to medical treatments if they are unwell or abnormal, or if it can be persuasively proved that the medical intervention is in the child's best interests.

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