



Adult Circumcision: Before Your Surgery

What is circumcision?

Circumcision removes the skin that covers the head of the penis. This is called the foreskin. Your doctor will "push" the foreskin from the head of the penis. Then he or she will trim the foreskin and sew down the edges. Your doctor may use any one of a number of ways to do this. You will have some small stitches. They will dissolve on their own.

You may have the surgery because you can't roll back your foreskin. This is called phimosis. Or you may need the surgery because your foreskin is stuck behind the penis head. This is called paraphimosis. After surgery, these problems will go away.

Some men have this surgery for religious or social reasons.

How do you prepare for surgery?

Surgery can be stressful. This information will help you understand what you can expect. And it will help you safely prepare for surgery.



Preparing for surgery

- Be sure you have someone to take you home. Anesthesia and pain medicine will make it unsafe for you to drive or get home on your own.
- Understand exactly what surgery is planned, along with the risks, benefits, and other options.
- If you take aspirin or some other blood thinner, ask your doctor if you should stop taking it before it.
- Tell your doctor ALL the medicines and natural health products you take. Some may increase the risk of problems during your surgery. Your doctor will tell you if you should stop taking any of them before the surgery and how soon to do it.

What happens on the day of surgery?

- If your doctor told you to take your medicines on the day of surgery, take them with only a sip of water.

- Follow your doctor's instructions about when to bathe or shower before your surgery. Do not apply lotions, perfumes, deodorants, or nail polish.
- Take off all jewelry and piercings. And take out contact lenses, if you wear them.

Morning of surgery

Plan to arrive at the hospital on time.

- Follow any instructions provided
- Bring all of the things you packed for your hospital stay **if** you are being admitted.
- Follow **all** other instructions the healthcare team gave you to prepare for surgery.
- Bring your CPAP if you use one



Plan Ahead

- **Plan a ride home.** Ask a family member or friend to bring you home after your hospital visit and stay with you for 24 hours.
- **Plan for meals.** Good nutrition is important for your recovery, but cooking may be harder to do right after you get home. Prepare and freeze meals before your surgery or ask friends and family to help you cook or shop for groceries.
- **Get help with chores.** After you get home you may need help. For a short time after your surgery, you may be told to avoid certain physical activities. Plan ahead and arrange to have some help with chores after your surgery.
- **Buy gum or hard candies.** Chewing gum and sucking on hard candies may help get your bowels moving after surgery.

Be as healthy as possible

- **Be active.** Being active before surgery will make it easier for you to be active after surgery. If you're normally active, keep doing your regular activities up to the day of your surgery. If you aren't used to exercising, start slowly. You can start by going for 15 minute walks.
- **Eat healthy.** Eating healthy foods will give your body the nutrients it needs to prepare for and handle the surgery. Eat healthy foods and drink enough fluids in the weeks before your surgery. Your healthcare team will tell you how long before surgery that you need to stop eating and drinking.
- **Manage your medical conditions.** If you have other medical conditions, such as anemia or high or low blood sugar, ask your healthcare team what you need to do to prepare for surgery.
- **Quit tobacco.** You can heal faster and prevent lung problems after surgery if you quit tobacco. Aim to quit smoking and using tobacco and tobacco-like products at least 4

weeks before surgery. Talk to your healthcare team about ways to quit or cut back. **Don't drink alcohol 24 hours before surgery.** Alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs may interact with medicines you take before and after surgery. Talk to your healthcare team if you need help stopping or cutting back on alcohol, cannabis, or other drugs.

Do the following before your surgery to help you feel better sooner and recover faster.

The day before surgery

- Know the time of your surgery, when you need to be at the hospital, and where you need to go when you get there.
- Follow any instructions the healthcare team or your surgeon gave you for your medicines (including herbal or complementary medicines).
- Don't drink alcohol 24 hours before your surgery.



- **Stop eating at midnight.** This is very important!
 - **Stop eating and drinking all non-clear fluids at midnight. This is very important**
 - **You may DRINK CLEAR FLUIDS ONLY up to 3 hours before surgery. This includes BLACK coffee, tea, Gatorade, apple juice and water.**



At the hospital

- Bring a picture ID health card
- The area for surgery is often marked to make sure there are no errors.
- You will be kept comfortable and safe by your anesthesia provider. The anesthesia may make you sleep. Or it may just numb the area being worked on.
- The surgery usually takes less than 1 hour.

When should you call your doctor?

- You have questions or concerns.
- You don't understand how to prepare for your surgery.
- You become ill before the surgery (such as fever, flu, or a cold).
- You need to reschedule or have changed your mind about having the surgery.

Adult Circumcision: What to Expect at Home

Discharge

How you may feel after your operation

- You may feel nauseated, light headed dizzy or sleepy for up to 24 hours after your surgery
- You may have a slight temperature for 2 days
- You may feel tired for a few days after your surgery

For 24 hours after your surgery do not....

- Drive a vehicle
- Operate heavy equipment
- Drink alcohol or smoke
- Make any important or legal decisions

What can you expect after having anesthesia?

Right after the surgery, you will be in the recovery room. Nurses will make sure you are comfortable. As the anesthesia wears off, you may feel some pain and discomfort from your surgery.

Tell someone if you have pain. Pain medicine works better if you take it before the pain gets bad.

You may feel some of the effects of anesthesia for a while. It takes time for the effects of the medicine to completely wear off.

- If you had local or regional anesthesia you may feel numb and have less feeling in part of your body. It may also take a few hours for you to be able to move and control your muscles as usual.
- When you first wake up from general anesthesia, you may be confused. Or it may be hard to think clearly. This is normal.
- Don't do anything for 24 hours that requires attention to detail. This includes going to work, making important decisions, or signing any legal documents.

Other common side effects of anesthesia include:

- Nausea and vomiting. This does not usually last long. It can be treated with medicine.
- A slight drop in body temperature. You may feel cold and shiver when you first wake up.
- A sore throat, if you had general anesthesia.
- Muscle aches or weakness.
- Feeling tired.

You may go home the same day of surgery or you may stay in the hospital. Your doctor will check on your recovery from the anesthesia. He or she will answer any questions you may have.

For answers to frequently asked questions about your anesthetic, please visit <https://www.cas.ca/en/about-cas/advocacy/anesthesia-faq>

Your Recovery

Your penis may swell and bruise for the first 2 days. It is generally not very painful. Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen are likely all you'll need.

You will probably have a dressing over the area or over your entire penis. Follow your doctor's directions about when to remove it. Wear underwear that is comfortable for you. Some men prefer a snug fit for support, while others prefer loose-fitting briefs. The underwear should hold the penis upright. This will help the swelling go down. The swelling usually goes down within 2 to 3 weeks after surgery.

This care sheet gives you a general idea about how long it will take for you to recover. But each person recovers at a different pace. Follow the steps below to get better as quickly as possible.

How can you care for yourself at home?



Activity

- Rest when you feel tired. Getting enough sleep will help you recover.
- Try to walk each day. Start by walking a little more than you did the day before. Bit by bit, increase the amount you walk.
- You may shower when you no longer have a bandage on your penis. Pat the cut (incision) dry. Avoid strenuous activities, such as bicycle riding, jogging, weight lifting, or aerobic exercise, for 4 weeks or until your doctor says it is okay.



Diet

- Begin with light foods, such as soup, toast, and tea. Avoid dairy and fatty foods as this might upset your stomach.
- Drink plenty of fluids (unless your doctor tells you not to).



Medicines

- Your doctor will tell you if and when you can restart your medicines. You will also get instructions about taking any new medicines.
- If you take aspirin or some other blood thinner, ask your doctor if and when to start taking it again. Make sure that you understand exactly what your doctor wants you to do.
- Take pain medicines exactly as directed.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - Do not take two or more pain medicines at the same time unless the doctor told you to. Many pain medicines have acetaminophen, which is Tylenol. Too much acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be harmful.
- If your doctor prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed. Do not stop taking them just because you feel better. You need to take the full course of antibiotics.



Incision care

- You may use petroleum jelly gauze, or apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly or polysporin ointment on the incision to avoid sticking to underwear
- Wear underwear that is comfortable for you. Some people prefer a snug fit for support, while others prefer loose-fitting briefs.



Ice and elevation

- Put ice or a cold pack on your groin for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to do this every 1 to 2 hours for the first day. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.



Other instructions

- Do not have intercourse or masturbate for 6 weeks, or until your doctor says it is okay. You will probably have a few erections. They aren't harmful as long as you leave them alone. Do not stimulate the penis.



Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You pass out (loses consciousness).
- You have severe trouble breathing.

Call your doctor or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have a fever.
- You have loose stitches, or your incision comes open.
- You find a spot of bleeding that won't stop
- You have signs of infection, such as red streaks or pus from the incision.