



Your Whole Baby

Sample Answers for Media Interviews

Why are you protesting circumcision?

Daily, thousands of newborn baby boys have an important, healthy, functional part of their penis unnecessarily cut off without proper pain management within days of their birth. Cutting boys' genitals without their consent is just as wrong as cutting girls' genitals without their consent. (The most common type of circumcision performed on boys and girls is the same: removal of the prepuce.)

Doesn't circumcision prevent penile cancer/cervical cancer/HIV/UTIs?

The short answer: no. Safe sex, limiting partners and/or abstinence help prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Besides, you don't remove healthy tissue to prevent even more common diseases. Removing a baby girl's breast buds at birth would prevent cases of breast cancer later in life, but everyone understands that would be unethical.

Women are much more prone to UTIs than men. The proper treatment is antibiotics, not foreskin amputation.

Shouldn't circumcision be a parent's decision?

Should circumcising a newborn baby girl be a parent's choice? This is no different. A newborn boy can grow up and decide to be circumcised later in life with proper pain management. Once a parent makes that decision for their son, it can never be undone. Circumcision comes with a wide range of painful and disfiguring complications and impacts sexual pleasure.

Doctors say it's better to be circumcised; are you smarter than a doctor?

Doctors are not gods. Doctors also used to recommend Coca Cola for babies and cigarettes for adults. Doctors are human and are also prone to be influenced by their culture, even when their culture's practices are not ethical or based on real science. And, let's be honest, doctors have a financial gain in cutting off babies' foreskin.

Medical organizations consisting of urologists, physicians and pediatricians in Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not recommend routine infant circumcision and the males in their countries are thriving with their foreskin intact. Many ethical American doctors are beginning to

speak out against circumcision as well. You can read articles from such doctors at yourwholebaby.org.

Most people think circumcised penises look better.

Many people in the United States might think so because they've been conditioned to think so. It's what they're familiar with seeing. If you go to countries where FGM is the norm, the men and women there will tell you that circumcised vaginas look better.

The majority of men in the world, around 70% according to the World Health Organization, are not circumcised. Most men around the world are thrilled to have their whole "package." Their significant others are thrilled too, because foreskin is sexually beneficially to both the intact male and his partner.

It's just a little snip. What's the big deal?

Circumcision is not just a little snip. Circumcision begins with ripping the foreskin from the head of the penis. It is fused, much like a fingernail is fused to your finger. After being ripped apart, the skin is cut from the body. Imagine having the most sensitive part of your body cut off without adequate pain relief. Because the foreskin has been removed, the head of the penis, which is meant to be an internal organ, is constantly exposed and becomes calloused. You can view pictures of the difference between intact and circumcised penises at yourwholebaby.org.

The baby is given anesthesia. He doesn't feel it.

There is no painkiller that can be given to a newborn for this procedure that is 100% effective. Babies feel the pain of having part of their penis cut off. Visit yourwholebaby.org and watch a few videos of circumcisions being performed; you will quickly see that babies feel the pain. The intensity of their screams tells the story.

The baby won't remember the pain. I don't.

Whether you remember being circumcised or not is irrelevant. It is still ethically wrong. If a woman is sexually assaulted after being drugged and she can't remember it, does that make it OK? No. It's a violation of another person's body without their consent. In addition, new research is showing that excruciating pain, such as the pain felt during a circumcision, permanently alters the chemistry of babies' brains.

Most men I talk to are happy they are circumcised.

I have never met an intact man who wished he was circumcised. I have met many men who are devastated that their foreskin was cut off without their consent. This is a huge decision that affects a man's sex life permanently and should be left up to him. It can be incredibly difficult

for a man to face what happened to him as a newborn. An important part of his genitals were cut off while he helplessly screamed. Many men can't, or don't want to, face what was truly done to them. They were powerless to protect their genitals. They were violated as babies and have a lifelong scar to remind them of the fact.

A lot of babies sleep through it.

Babies do not sleep through circumcisions. They sometimes go into shock from the pain, which results in a quiet state that can be mistaken for sleep. This is a coping mechanism the human body uses to deal with extreme anguish.

It's better for the baby in the long run.

Circumcision not only hurts the newborn baby boy but also hurts the man the baby will become. If you view images at yourwholebaby.org and look at the difference between the circumcised and intact penis, you can see how the head of the penis is calloused on circumcised men. These images may begin to help you understand the importance of the foreskin and its benefits to men and their partners.

It's better to do it when they're babies.

Circumcision should not be done to newborn babies. Newborn babies can't receive adequate painkiller. If a man wants to be circumcised as an adult, he can make that decision for himself when he has access to pain relief for the procedure and the healing process.

It's hard to keep them clean if they aren't circumcised.

There is NOTHING difficult about keeping an intact newborn penis clean. You wipe it like a finger. But it is VERY difficult to keep the open wound caused by circumcision clean in a urine and feces soaked diaper.

I know somebody who had to get circumcised as an adult because of infections.

In Finland, where newborn circumcision is not performed, only 1 out of every 16,667 adult intact males will have to be circumcised as an adult for medical reasons. It's extremely rare. In the rare instances that scarring or infection occurs, it is almost always the result of forced retraction. What is common is complications from circumcision such as hemorrhaging, excess skin removed, skin bridges and sexual dysfunction.

Shouldn't a son's penis match his father's penis?

There is usually not a lot of genital comparing done in households. No two vaginas look alike. No two penises look alike. A father's penis is large and hairy. A son's penis is small and hairless.

By the time they might have some degree of “matching,” they are most likely no longer seeing each other naked.

There is no better gift a father can give his son than to one day explain to him, “My mommy and daddy had part of my penis cut off when I born because they thought it was the right thing to do. I learned that it wasn’t the right thing to do, so I told the doctor not to hurt you when you were born.” Ask any four-year-old little boy if he wants part of his penis cut off and you’ll get a quick, passionate and horrified NO.

Intactivists are overly obsessed with babies’ penises.

Intactivists are trying to promote unnecessary suffering for our most vulnerable citizens. Celebrities such as Ben Affleck, Mario Lopez, Joe Rogan, Cameron Diaz and Alicia Silverstone all speak out against circumcision. I would argue that it is the people who are needlessly cutting babies’ penises who are the obsessed ones.

Aren’t Christians supposed to circumcise for religious reasons?

Since the beginning of Christianity, Christians have stood against circumcision. The decision of the entire Christian church in Acts 15 was that circumcision was not necessary for the Gentiles, and Paul said in 1 Corinthians 7 that any man who was uncircumcised should not become circumcised. This became a major point of New Testament teaching, with Paul even calling those who demanded circumcision “dogs” and “mutilators of the flesh.”

Since then, all major branches of Christianity have rejected circumcision, from the Church Fathers, to Protestant Reformers like Martin Luther and John Calvin, to Catholic popes and church-wide councils. Christians believe that God designed the human body, and so it is unchristian to remove functional, healthy parts of it unless absolutely necessary. Despite current practice in the USA, the vast majority of Christians worldwide wouldn’t even think of circumcising their children.

Aren’t Jews supposed to circumcise for religious reasons?

In some countries, Jews do not practice circumcision any more, and yet have thriving communities. More and more rabbis around the world are performing *brit shalom*, an alternative, peaceful Jewish ritual that does not involve genital modification.

From a historical perspective, it is interesting to note that the circumcision procedure performed nowadays is quite unlike what was initially performed in ancient Judaism. It has been extended and expanded to remove much more tissue – and multiple functions – that were originally not removed. Both medieval and modern Jewish scholarship recognize this.