

Circumcision is a safe and effective procedure to remove the foreskin from the penis. It is performed in adults when the foreskin is unable to retract, when men develop recurrent infections of the foreskin and head of the penis or for cancer of the penis. It is also performed in adults who simply choose to have their foreskin removed; however, under these circumstances, the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) will not pay for the operation.

## **PREPARATION FOR SURGERY >**

### ***Medications to avoid prior to surgery***

Any medications that affect bleeding should be stopped prior to surgery. The following medications should be stopped 7 days prior to surgery: ASA (Aspirin/Entrophen), warfarin (Coumadin), clopidogrel (Plavix), dipyridamole (Aggrenox), ticagrelor (Brilinta), ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs). The following medications should be stopped 72 hours prior to surgery: dabigatran (Pradaxa), rivaroxaban (Xarelto) and apixaban (Eliquis). If you have any questions about your medications prior to surgery, please contact your surgeon.

### ***Diet prior to surgery***

You may eat your normal diet up until midnight the night before your surgery. Do not eat any solid food, milk or cream after midnight the night before your surgery. You may drink up to 400 mL (1.5 cups) of water up to 3 hours before surgery. You may not drink any other fluids. You may have sips of water with your morning medications.

## **THE SURGERY >**

### ***In the operating room***

Circumcision is performed under a general anesthetic, meaning you will be asleep for the operation, or under a regional anesthetic, meaning you will be frozen from the lower abdomen downward. The operation typically takes 30 minutes.

### ***Potential risks and complications***

Although the operation is very safe, a number of potential risks exist. These include the following:

- Bleeding

- Infection
- Injury to the urethra (the tube that allows flow of urine from the bladder)
- Wound breakdown
- Curvature of the penis
- Meatal stenosis (narrowing of the opening of the urine passage)
- Unsuitable skin removal (too much skin removed or too much skin left behind)
- Poor cosmetic result
- General risks associated with all types of surgery including heart attack, stroke and blood clots in the legs or lungs

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY >**

### ***During your stay in hospital***

- **Length of hospitalization:** You can return home the day of your surgery.
- **Pain:** You may experience some mild discomfort after surgery around your penis. This can be treated with pain medications by mouth.
- **Diet:** You will be able to resume your normal diet after your surgery.
- **Ambulation:** You are encouraged to walk around beginning in the evening after your surgery.

### ***After leaving the hospital***

- **Pain:** You may experience some mild discomfort around your incision. This can usually be controlled with acetaminophen (Tylenol). You will be given a prescription for a stronger pain medication in case it is needed.
- **Showering:** You may shower 2 days after your surgery. Do not soak your incision. Carefully dry your incision following a shower. You may not take a bath for 2 weeks after your surgery.
- **Activity:** Walking is strongly encouraged after your surgery. Prolonged lying in bed should be avoided to prevent the development of blood clots in your legs. Heavy lifting (more than 10-20 pounds), running and vigorous exercise must be avoided for 4 weeks after your surgery. Sexual activity should be avoided for 4 weeks.
- **Incision:** Your incision will have been closed with stitches. These will dissolve on their own after several weeks and do not need to be removed. You may remove the dressing on your penis after 48 hours. Apply Polysporin ointment to your incision twice daily for 2 weeks after your surgery.

- **Diet:** You may resume your normal diet once you have returned home from hospital.
- **Work:** Most people can return to work 1-2 weeks after surgery.
- **Antibiotics:** You may be given a prescription for antibiotics to take after your surgery to prevent infection.
- **Follow-up appointment:** You will need an appointment to visit your surgeon 4-8 weeks after your surgery to see how you are healing. Please call your surgeon to schedule this appointment if it has not been done for you before your discharge from hospital.

### **WHEN TO SEEK MEDICAL CARE >**

Contact your surgeon if you experience any of the following after surgery:

- Inability to urinate
- Blood in the urine
- Increased bleeding from your incision
- Your pain gets significantly worse
- Increasing redness or swelling around your incision
- Unexplained fever over 38.5 degrees Celsius / 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Very bad smell coming from your incision

Proceed immediately to the emergency room if you experience any of the following after surgery:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Severe lightheadedness or feeling faint
- You have a serious concern and are unable to contact your surgeon