Pediatric Circumcision

Circumcision is a surgical procedure to remove the foreskin, the skin covering the end of the penis. Surgery is done in the operating room under anesthesia or in our Pediatric Sedation Clinic. Circumcision may be done at any age. Your child can go home the same day. This handout will tell you how to care for your child at home after circumcision.

Home Care
The penis will be red, swollen, tender and may ooze a small amount of blood or fluid after surgery. This is normal.

Use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Motrin) for pain. Your doctor may prescribe stronger pain medicine if your child is older.

Your child may have a bandage over the penis. Your child's provider will tell you how and when to remove. After the bandage comes off, apply a large amount (quarter-sized) Vaseline or petroleum jelly to the site a few times a day for at least two weeks, then as needed. For infants, apply it with each diaper change.

Your child may have pain or tenderness with movement or diaper changes. Gently wipe the penis with water and soap or a baby wipe. Pain will lessen as the penis heals, usually in about a week.

Your child may bathe as instructed by your provider. Frequent bathing helps the penile skin to heal and may comfort your child. Recommend baths with warm soapy water for 5-10 min 1-2 times daily to help the area heal.

Your child will have stitches. The stitches will dissolve on their own, usually in 2-4 weeks depending on how often your child is bathing, but may last up to 90 days.

Activity
- No straddling, rough play, sports, gym class or any swimming/splash pads for 2-3 weeks.
- Your child may do other activities when he feels comfortable.

When to Call
If you have any problems, please call your clinic or doctor.

Who to Call
If you have questions, please contact your child's provider through MyChart or call your child's provider listed in your After Visit Summary or After Hospital Care Plan. For a list of UW Health Clinics, visit www.uwhealth.org/

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 12/2025 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5745