

# Circumcision Does Not Reduce Penile Sensitivity Or Affect Sexual Pleasure Later In Life

Apr 15, 2016 04:33 PM By Dana Dovey @danadovey



The practice of circumcision doesn't seem to impede on an infant's future sex life. Pixabay, Public Domain

The decision to circumcise a newborn son may be a no-brainer for parents belonging to certain religious groups such as Judaism and Islam, but for an increasing number of parents in North America, the choice can be a true dilemma. However, for those leaning in the direction of pro-circumcision, a new study may have some reassuring news: The popular procedure does not reduce penile sensitivity — a finding that could challenge what we thought we knew about the foreskin.

The circumcision, a procedure where the foreskin that covers the head of the penis is removed, has been practiced worldwide for millennia. The BBC reports that in the United States, newborn circumcision rates are falling and are now below 50 percent in some states, but worldwide there is still around one circumcision

performed every 30 seconds. Although the procedure is widely practiced, the long-term effects it may have on penile sensitivity are still not completely understood. In an effort to better understand this topic, a team of researchers lead by Dr. Jennifer Bossio from Queen's University in Ontario, Canada, studied 62 men between the ages of 18 and 37, of whom 30 were circumcised and 32 were not.

The men underwent a series of penile sensitivity tests including tactile detection, warmth detection, and pain threshold at various sites on their penises. In addition, the men were asked to give their own report of their sexual satisfaction, orgasmic function, and sexual desire over the course of four weeks. Results showed that there was no clear difference between the circumcised and uncircumcised men in any of the tests or self reports.

"This study indicates that neonatal circumcision is not associated with changes in penile sensitivity and provides preliminary evidence to suggest that the foreskin is not the most sensitive part of the penis," said Bossio in a recent statement.

The study did not conclude that sexual function and circumcision status were not completely unrelated, but they did propose that any relationship between the two was not the result of decreased sensitivity due to neonatal circumcision. According to the researchers, the finding also suggests that the foreskin is not the most sensitive part of the penis, as is currently believed.

Although around 75 percent of American men are circumcised, the BBC reported that today only between 55-57 percent of newborn babies in America undergo this procedure and this rate is dropping by about 1 percent every year. Still, despite the American public's turn away from circumcisions, the procedure is not completely without its advantages. For example, circumcisions lower rates of urinary tract infections and can also lower the reduction of HIV transmission by 50 to 60 percent, Dr. Jonathan Mermin of the CDC told The New York Times.

Ultimately, the decision on whether or not to circumcise a child can be very personal for a family, and now parents can rest assured that their youngster's intimate parts will remain fully functional, no matter what path they choose.

Source: Bossio JA, Pukall CF, Steele SS. Examining Penile Sensitivity in Neonatally Circumcised and Intact Men Using Quantitative Sensory Testing. The Journal of Urology . 2016