

## Care of your son's uncircumcised penis – IMPORTANT!!!!

1. Leave it alone. Do not attempt (or let anyone else) retract his foreskin forcibly. Doing so leads to tearing of the natural attachment of his foreskin to the head or glans of his penis. Pain, bleeding, and scarring could result.
2. Wash only with mild baby-appropriate soap, and rinse well. The soap should be pH-balanced and unscented. Examples are Baby Magic or Aveeno baby soap.
3. At diaper changes, apply a lubricant like A&D ointment to the tip of the intact foreskin to protect the fragile skin and encourage drainage of secretions and urine entrapped under the foreskin.
4. Adherence of the foreskin to the head of the penis is natural at the time of birth. These natural attachments may take years to separate. Some boys don't achieve full retraction of the foreskin until after puberty, when erections occur and hasten the process. It is best not to force the skin back until the boy can be taught to reposition the skin back over the glans after retraction. (See #8 below.)
5. It is normal to see discharge of a cheesy-white material from beneath the foreskin. This material is not pus and does not signify infection. It is merely the accumulation of secretions from lubricating glands and sloughed skin cells. The whitish substance sometimes coalesces into pellets or "pearls" that are visible as mounds under the foreskin. The discharge of these pellets is believed to contribute to the slow, gentle process of natural separation of the foreskin from the head of the penis.
6. If the opening of the foreskin beyond the head of the penis becomes tight, you may note that the foreskin "balloons" as he urinates. Again, leave it alone. This entrapment of urine beneath the foreskin becomes a problem only if infection develops. (See #7.)
7. If the opening becomes so tight that he can't urinate, screams during urination, or if he develops repeated infections marked by discharge of foul-smelling pus and redness of the foreskin and penile skin, then his foreskin has become *phimotic*. This condition usually mandates a circumcision for relief.
8. If an uncircumcised boy has his foreskin retracted forcibly and the foreskin is not then repositioned back to its original position covering the head of the penis, a condition called *paraphimosis* can develop. This condition is a surgical emergency, as the progressive swelling can constrict the blood flow to the head of the penis and in the worst cases erode into the urethra or voiding channel. In these grave situations, he would require not only a circumcision but also extensive reconstructive surgery.
9. These conditions – *phimosis* and *paraphimosis* - remain risks throughout life for the uncircumcised boy. It is imperative that he receives education, as he becomes independent, about proper care and the meaning of the symptoms described above.