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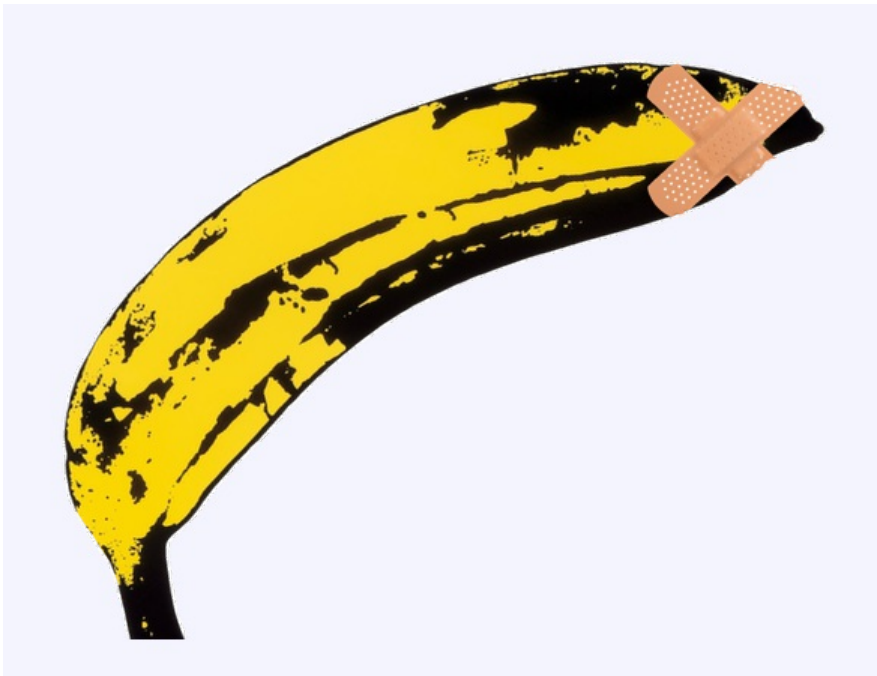
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The Foreskin Renaissance

 JANUARY 18, 2011 BY [LAURA NOVAK](#)  119 COMMENTS

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Circumcision has been on the wane for years, but a growing community of men are out to reverse the snip decision their parents made years ago. Meet the foreskin restoration movement.

Tally has been tugging on his penis for two years. His hand movements are methodical and prescribed. He forms the OK symbol with the index fingers and thumbs on both hands and pulls down on the shaft, stretching it between his spreading hands. After five minutes of tugging, Tally does what any man in a public restroom does: tucks in his shirt, steps out of the stall, washes his hands, and returns to the desk. Tally has what he's after: his foreskin is slacker. He's happier because of that. And his co-workers are none the wiser.

Tally is short for Tallywacker, a British nickname for penis. It is also the nom de Internet of a 55-year-old, heterosexual, happily married attorney in Tennessee who is at the vanguard of the foreskin restoration movement. With evangelical zest, he shares his story, and a sequential series of photographs of his penis, to thousands of private members and hundreds of daily visitors to his websites, [RestoringForeskin.org](#) and [RestoringTally.com](#).

"Foreskin restoration has changed my life, like I never imagined was possible," he says. "At 55, I'm enjoying sex like I'm in my 20s. Having my foreskin has made me feel more confident and comfortable in my skin and

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body.”



Circumcision has been practiced for millennia, across continents and cultures. Anthropologists disagree about its origins; some think it goes back 15,000 years to a single culture, some think it originated independently at different times, in different places, for different reasons. We know that Australian aborigines, Native Americans, and ancient Egyptians practiced it, dating back at least 6,000 years.



Over time, circumcision took on religious significance in Judaism, Islam, and even Christianity. Jews consider it a commandment from God; Muslims believe it to be one of five acts that “befit the natural state of man.” And then there is the Holy Foreskin (or prepuce) of Jesus, cut off in a cave on his eighth day of life, and supposedly handed down through the centuries by popes, kings, and even Charlemagne himself. It was thought to have magical properties—and if the accounts are to be believed it would have had to, given that during the Middle Ages, there were as many as 18 HolyPrepuces scattered across Europe.

John Harvey Kellogg prescribed circumcision (along with, it should be noted, Corn Flakes) to prevent masturbation.

By the mid-19th century, circumcision was medicalized. It was proposed as treatment for a range of conditions, from the mutually counterintuitive—priapism and impotence,

paralysis and epilepsy—to some that are still cited today: prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and foreskin-related problems like phimosis and balanitis.

By the turn of the 20th century, it was widely advocated by doctors, including John Harvey Kellogg, who prescribed circumcision (along with, it should be noted, Corn Flakes) to prevent masturbation.

In the 1930s, by some accounts, the neonatal circumcision rate was around 32 percent. That figure rose over the ensuing decades, peaking in the ’70s, when 80 to 90 percent of American boys were circumcised as infants.



Tally came to foreskin restoration through the back door. Two years ago, while researching surgery he was about to have for bacterial prostatitis, he stumbled on an abundance of anecdotal information online from men in their 40s and 50s who had lost penile sensitivity or the ability to ejaculate. Tally recognized himself in their stories and confided in the urologist who would perform the prostate surgery.

“I talked to him about the trouble to get erections and taking me longer to complete having sex. And of course his response was he gave me a free sample of Viagra. Viagra helps the erection problem. You’ll stand at attention. But it doesn’t make the sex act pleasurable,” Tally says. “Sex wasn’t fun anymore. There were times when she’d say, ‘Aren’t you done yet?’”

But Tally says while most men think that diminished penile sensitivity is just a normal part of aging, he also found an abundance of narratives by men who restored their foreskins and reported that those problems went away. The idea that Tally’s circumcision might have harmed his penis began to firm up.



The effects of circumcision on penile sensitivity is the subject of debate, but NORM, the National Organization for Restoring Men in San Francisco, reports that more than 20,000 nerve endings are amputated through circumcision.

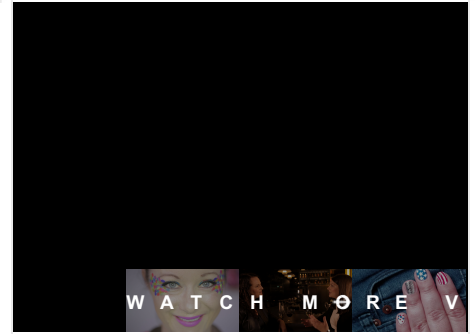
For a little over two decades, [NORM](#) has been Penis Central for “intactivists,” circumcision opponents and men wishing to restore their foreskin.

NORM co-founder R. Wayne Griffiths, 77, whose outreach efforts have spawned two dozen groups in seven countries across five continents, says he has provided information to at least 10,000 men—and there is no letup in sight.

Griffiths was among those who revived interest in foreskin restoration in the U.S., but uncircumcision is hardly a new phenomenon. The first historical references appear in the Old Testament (I Maccabees 1: 14–15): “Whereupon they built a place of exercise at Jerusalem according to the customs of the heathen. And made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do mischief.”

To avoid persecution during the reign of Antiochus (175–163 B.C.), circumcised Jews stretched their remaining foreskins with a specially designed weight, the *Pondus Judaeus*. A Roman medical text written during the reign of Tiberius (A.D. 14–37), *De Medicina*, contains the first-known reference to surgical

M O D E V I



FEATURED CONTENT



6 Steps to Becoming an Outgoing Introvert

Johnny Pharr had been an introvert all his life, until he discovered the secrets to being an outrovert.



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restoration. And although few written accounts exist, surgical foreskin restoration, understandably, made a comeback among European Jews during the 1930s and '40s.

The latest restoration revival isn't limited to American enthusiasts. "I recently got emails from men in Saudi Arabia, Israel, the Baltic countries, and Russia," Griffiths says. "I'm always amazed at where these men come from, whether it's Kokomo, Indiana, the Philippines, Japan, or China. It keeps happening."



Pondus Judaeus

And the number one reason why? Better sex. "Men have lost tens of thousands of nerve endings that have been amputated," he says. "No one has feelings anymore."



That argument is lost on Dr. Joel Piser. He has been a urologist in private practice in Berkeley, California, for 24 years. And for the past 20 years, he has been a mohel, circumcising newborns as part of the Jewish ritual Brit Milah.

Tally maintains that there's newfound magic in his johnson—no matter what science says.

Piser says he hasn't seen a surgical foreskin restoration in Berkeley in 23 years. And while he's seen a few men who have manually restored, he says,

medically speaking, the gain is, as the saying goes, all in the big head.

"The few I've seen, it covers part of the glans. It could pass for an uncircumcised penis. Do I think they're gaining anything other than cosmetic? No, I do not. I don't see how it's anatomically possible to rejuvenate nerves by just stretching the penile shaft skin over the glans. That's not physiologically plausible. If the nerves in the penile skin could be rejuvenated by stretching, we'd be transplanting foreskin into spinal cords," Dr. Piser says.

Tally maintains that there's newfound magic in his johnson—no matter what science says.

"The difference I feel is not about the number of nerve endings I have. It is about stimulating what I have in a different way. The gliding action rolls the inner foreskin over the corona, both of which are highly innervated normally. The sensation from the gliding action is very pleasurable and new to me."



Circumcision is a lucrative industry, earning the medical community hundreds of millions of dollars annually for the 1.3 million circs done each year. But an equally ambitious, if not as lucrative, [industry](#) has sprouted up for men willing to stretch their foreskin. Manual tugging can involve tape, extension devices such as cones, weights, elastics, and just palm-to-penis pull action.



Tally tried two different devices but didn't have enough foreskin to work with. "In order to wear the device you have to have enough slack skin for it to fit. I had a very tight circ so I had very little slack skin." So he began manual tugging and made excellent progress. The routine conveniently coincided with frequent bathroom visits following his prostate surgery.

"I've noticed major differences in masturbation within about four months. Increase in sensitivity around the six- to eight-month mark just in general and in sex. At about the one-year point, I hit a milestone, full flaccid coverage," Tally says. "I had enough of a restored foreskin so when I'm hanging natural, I am covered. If someone saw me now,

they'd say I wasn't circumcised."

That's music to the ears of the roughly 2,800 active participants at RestoringForeskin.org. Tally spends two hours a day moderating comments and answering questions online.

And who, exactly, is asking? Tally says the demographics are divided evenly between gay and straight, under 30 and over 40. One member is in his 80s, but it's the younger set, Tally reports, that's particularly interested in foreskin restoration.

"They're brought up on the Internet, learning, 'Hey, they cut off part of my sex organ and I want it back.'" That, in a sentence, has become the clarion call of the foreskin restoration movement: you're missing out—it's so much better au naturel.



At least that's the message Matt got at the tender age of 15 when he stumbled on information online about FR.

"I had never heard of it," Matt said. "I didn't have much self-esteem in the first place, but it scared me—it said



4 Freedoms This Dad Wishes for Independence Day

Happy 4th of July! Dad Matt Sweetwood ponders on the freedoms he wishes for as a dad.



Dealing With Dad

It was a "gift" they weren't expecting but have come to fully understand.



Dads Cookin' with Kids; Freedom Edition

Celebrating All Family Structures on Independence Day



The Three Universal Relationship Wounds

Jed Diamond explains how abandonment, shame, and betrayal impact us throughout our lives.

if you are circumcised, when you have sex with a woman she won't feel pleasure, only pain. I didn't want my wife not to be happy with me sexually when I eventually got married. So I found ways to grow it back."

Matt, a 26-year-old New Yorker active in the online FR community, asked that his real name not be used. His attempts to restore his foreskin lasted 11 frustrating years before he opted to be re-circumcised.

"The devices didn't work well or they would hurt too much so I had to take them off," Matt said. "I never liked the way it looked. The grown-back version is always so much thicker and not very natural-looking—like a swollen version of a foreskin."

The smell of smegma (the cheese-like secretion found under an unwashed foreskin), the feel of his new, loose skin—just about everything about his lengthening foreskin—turned Matt off of the process. But at the same time—adding to his confusion—he found just as many men online citing better sex as a result of adult circumcision.

Matt eventually went to a urologist, who re-circumcised him almost a year ago. But he was disappointed, he says, that the doctor "didn't take more off"—so in July he had the procedure done again, by a different urologist, 11 years after he first began growing it back.

This is precisely the type of story that makes some medical professionals roll their eyes in frustration or disgust. While most restoring websites focus on facts, just as many traffic in personal anecdotes and hysterical grievances.

For Matt, the worst thing about his restoration adventure was the influence the people on the Internet had on him.

For Matt, the worst thing about his restoration adventure was the influence the people on the Internet had on him. When he told the story of his two re-circumcisions online, others in the community accused him of lying. "They said how evil circumcision is. Some said they hated their parents because they let it be done to them," he says, emphasizing that restorers are often swept up in the rhetoric. "One guy said he wanted to pee on his doctor's grave."

"Circumcision inflames a lot of people because they need a focus," says Dr. Piser. "I want them to look at things objectively and try to eliminate the emotional component, which is hard to do when it comes to the phallus."



In the medical community, there is mild debate about circumcision's benefits.

It is virtually impossible to get penile cancer when circumcised. It is similarly rare to see balanitis (inflammation of any residual foreskin) and it eliminates the possibility of phimosis, a condition in which the foreskin cannot retract from the glans. Snipped newborns are 10 times less likely to get a urinary tract infection.

To be fair, these conditions are rare in uncircumcised men as well. And for over a decade, neither the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) nor the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have advocated routine neonatal circumcision.

And there's evidence that the anti-circ groundswell is having an effect. In August, the CDC confirmed that between 2006 and 2009, the U.S. infant circumcision rate declined from about 50 to 33 percent—its lowest rate since the 1930s.

While the AAP and the CDC aren't taking sides, the World Health Organization (WHO) considers circumcision part of a comprehensive HIV prevention program. They cite [compelling evidence](#) that it reduces the risk of HIV transmission in heterosexual sex by up to 60 percent.

Research [released](#) just last week indicates that circumcision also helps reduce the spread of human papillomavirus (HPV), which can lead to cervical cancer in women (HPV is the most prevalent sexually transmitted disease in the U.S.).

Both the CDC and the AAP are reevaluating their positions on circumcision in light of new data. Results from the AAP's circumcision task force are likely to be released this year.

Not surprisingly, the new findings haven't silenced critics of the procedure—among them, mothers, Jews, doctors, and the restoring community. For intactivists, the rhetoric has shifted from a risk-benefit analysis to an anti-mutilation, human-rights argument.



"It's quite the task to change your body—to accept that you had a procedure done that harms you."



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This Dad Rode 545 Miles For Gay Son Who Died Before He Could

When David Flannigan lost his son to AIDS, he decided to honor him, one mile at a time.



The Heterosexual Couple That Waited 6 Years to Marry

Jordan & Roxy, a heterosexual couple committed to a life together, refused to marry until all couples in the USA could. They only had to wait 6 years. Here is their inspiring story.

Randy Tymkin was only 32 when he realized that the sensitivity in his penis was going away, “quicker than I could have hoped for.” This was 15 years ago, when the Internet wasn’t the fount of FR information it is today. Still, the idea that he could restore some sensitivity intrigued him.

Living in Winnipeg, Manitoba, meant Randy went to tanning salons during the long winter. He suspected the UV rays were one reason he felt desensitized. Wearing jock straps and jeans without underwear were also culprits. “I thought of how rough our hands can be when we masturbate,” he says. “Running callous skin up and down on the naked glans. So I started thinking about this.”



Randy’s thinking turned into tinkering. He got out a sewing machine and created a little silk hood that fit over the tip of his penis, acting as a foreskin substitute. He trademarked it the [ManHood](#), and found that wearing his creation increased the sensitivity in his penis—so much, he says, “I could not *not* wear it.”

Randy, who works as a juvenile jail guard, began advertising his product in two magazines. Within days, his mailbox was stuffed with 27 orders. Today, he fills up to four orders a day and has sold upward of 20,000 ManHoods without further advertising.

Encouraged by the renewed sensitivity he’d acquired, Randy used tape and weights to stretch about three-fourths of an inch of skin over a period of a few months, but he gave up: “If you have plans for sex, going swimming, or playing sports, you can’t because the device is cumbersome.”

Randy settled for wearing his own silk creation, filling orders, and answering emails from men who are circumcised as well as those who are restoring. But his interest in, or perhaps outrage at, routine infant circumcision, has not abated.

“I wish I hadn’t been circumcised. I don’t blame anybody except doctors. I wouldn’t trust their answers. I don’t think they’re educated,” he says. “When I was circumcised, everyone was. The guy in the shower who wasn’t would be rare. We looked at him like he was different. And he should have looked at us like we were different because we were the ones who changed.”



If the San Diego–based advocacy group [MGMbill.org](#) has its way, locker rooms of the future *will* be a very different place. The group, founded in 2003, is dedicated to preventing the circumcision of newborns. (MGM is the acronym for male genital mutilation.)

Last week, the group’s regional directors [contacted](#) some 2800 legislators in search of a sponsor for its bill, which would extend the 1996 prohibition on female genital cutting to males. The bill would make it illegal—punishable by up to 14 years in prison—for anyone to circumcise or assist in the removal of male genitalia (except when deemed medically necessary for the health of a child) of anyone under 18 years old.

It’s a bill Dr. Piser calls “nonsense.”

“Even if you’re against circumcision,” he says, “why would you make it so that someone else couldn’t do it if they wanted?”

Intactivists, who prefer the term “male genital mutilation,” believe the removal of the foreskin is a straightforward human rights issue: we don’t allow parents to choose neglect or abuse, and thus we shouldn’t allow parents to choose circumcision.

But the [comparison](#) of male to female circumcision isn’t so straightforward. Female genital mutilation [involves](#) the total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.



The twain may never meet on the medical benefits or religious significance of male circumcision, or on the physiological truth to the joys of foreskin restoration. But it’s the leap to equate male circumcision with female genital mutilation that irks Hugo Schwyzer.

“I have no qualms about foreskin restoration. But let’s not equate circumcision with a man being robbed of his essence. And I don’t want him elevating what was a fundamentally minor surgical procedure to the status of mutilation. I find that offensive as a feminist in particular. And as man who’s been on both sides of it, I find it ridiculous.”

Mr. Schwyzer is no stranger to the heated debate around infant male circumcision and its correlation—or not—to female genital mutilation. Four years ago, Schwyzer, a writer and college professor living in Los Angeles, wrote a magazine article about the circumcision he had as an adult. He was, in his own words,



A Dad Ponders the Loss of the Independence of His Youth and Discovers His Freedom Now

Dad Sean just turned 40. He had an amazing independence when he was younger, but he would not trade what he has now to get it back. Here’s why.



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"hammered by the anti-circumcision" people who perpetuated "the false equivalence between male circumcision and female genital mutilation."

"All of that leads me to be very clear that there is no comparison. It's used as a serious argument. It cheapens and diminishes the discussion about circumcision. And invalidates what are some reasons we should rethink infant circumcision."

Schwzyer, now 43, is married and the father of a daughter, 2. His decision to undergo a circumcision when he was 37 was fueled by a hard-earned combination of medical and psychological imperatives. Schwzyer was an alcohol, drug, and sex addict who managed to earn a Ph.D. while burning through three marriages. "I was very much your classic addict, so my penis went a lot of places," he says. Those "places" inflicted a series of sex-related injuries that involved repeated tearing of the frenulum, the triangle of skin where the foreskin attaches to the underside of the penis. Life in the fast lane over 18 years took its toll on Schwzyer, who calls himself "a walking cliché." He ended up in a hospital emergency room on death's door.

Schwzyer underwent circumcision just before he married his current wife. "I did it for two reasons: to deal with frenular tearing and scarring, and to symbolize this commitment to enduring monogamy."

"And not only is the pain gone, but the pleasure has not been reduced. The pleasure is as strong as it ever was."

"I've met men who were circumcised as infants who have an amazingly deep sense they were robbed of something. Dude, get over yourself!"

He further explains: "The penis I had had, uncircumcised, had been with a lot of people. With the circumcised penis, I would only be sexual with my wife. It wasn't born-again virginity. It was a way of

saying, 'Look, I am different.'"

The majority of public reaction to Schwzyer's story was intertwined with the growing narrative that circumcision is abuse by another name.

"If a guy wants to do foreskin restoration, knock yourself out," Schwzyer says. "But for the men who feel they lost something—the foreskin wasn't all that. I had great experiences with it. Foreskin can be integrated into sex play. There's no question there are nerve endings there," Schwzyer continued. "But I've met men who were circumcised as infants who have an amazingly deep sense they were robbed of something. Dude, get over yourself!"

Schwzyer concedes that opponents of circumcision have valid concerns when they argue that it's painful, unethical, and full of possible post-procedure complications from scarring, ulceration, and hemorrhage.

"But this idea that circumcision was this horrific violation comparable to sex abuse, and that you were deprived of something extraordinarily valuable? Having had a lot of sex both ways, I can say *no*. I find it ridiculous."

"Let's step back and take a deep breath," Dr. Piser says. "This is a valid, valuable medical procedure. Whether you want to do it to help protect your child from urinary tract infections, penile cancer, and HIV transmission, or whether you want to do it electively as an adult. That's personal. But there is a huge psychological component to all of this."



And that's one thing all sides of the argument can probably agree on: that for a little piece of skin, whether retracted or restored, the foreskin carries a lot of emotional baggage for a growing number of men.

But who is to question whether restoration, and its sequelae of an allegedly super-improved sex life, is all in the big head rather than the little? After all, pleasure—as Shakespeare might have said of his willy—is in the prepuce of the restorer.

"Emotionally, I *am* different from restoring," Tally says. "I'm freed up to experience life. I don't have the vocabulary. I have no explanation for it. It's just something I've observed."



If you haven't had your foreskin fix yet, check out "[Why I Let My Son Get Snipped](#)."

[The Foreskin Renaissance](#)

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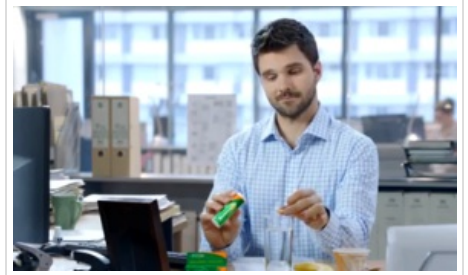


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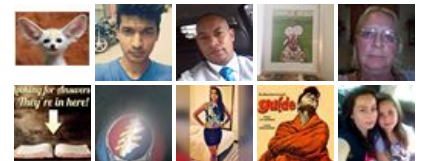
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About Laura Novak

Laura Novak is a former television news journalist who has written extensively for *The New York Times* on health, business, and the arts. She hopes to publish her first novel, *Finding Clarity*, and she is at work on a mystery series. You can find her on [Scribd](#) and find her on

[Twitter](#).

Comments



Lippy Girl says:

January 21, 2011 at 8:53 pm

Aisha you say you can't believe that any man has experienced the kind of pain and fear that African girls are put through when being cut. This is rather ignorant and in its kneejerk sexism also rather offensive.

This story outlines just how male circumcision is done in many communities around the world – just the same circumstances – children aged between 5-10 years old are held down by up to six adults. Many end up in hospital as a result, and deaths do occur too. [In South Africa last year 91 boys and young men died of circumcision wounds, with others surviving but losing their penis to gangrene – even in clinical conditions in the US over 100 boys pa are estimated to die from circ.]

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/1670590.stm>

If you want to know what male circumcision looks like in most places in the world try looking at these pictures. I hope you will feel ashamed that knowing nothing about the male experience of circumcision still you sought to trivialise it. Consider for a moment how these boys feel about the mother who handed them over to receive this kind of treatment, and didn't protect them. The world will be a safer place for everyone when we stop brutalising kids.

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/76625506/AFP>

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/74949650/Getty-Images-News>

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/74970532/AFP>

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/74971113/AFP>

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/77236129/AFP>

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/88961157/AFP>

Reply



RelievedMom says:

February 1, 2011 at 7:11 am

Thanks for this LG – reminds me that I made the right decision by not having my son circumcised (and that the opinions of men who are against it should be respected).

[Reply](#)



Bryce McNell says:

January 24, 2011 at 6:07 pm

To those that claim FGM and MGM are not comparable, a side by side comparison:

FGC MGM

Cutting? YES YES

Of the genitals? YES YES

Of babies? YES YES

Of children? YES YES

Without consent? YES YES

At parents' behest? YES YES

Removing erogenous tissue? YES YES

Supposedly beneficial? YES YES

Justified by aesthetics? YES YES

Justified by supposed health benefits? YES YES

Justified by religion? YES YES

Justified by sexual effects? YES YES

Justified by custom? YES YES

Justified by conformity? YES YES

Effects minimized by its supporters? YES YES

Performed by its adult victims? YES YES

Extremely painful? YES YES

Can cause harm? YES YES

Very severe damage? USUALLY SOMETIMES

Can cause death? YES YES

Legal in Western countries? NO YES

The bottom line – strapping a human being down and cutting their genitals is a violation of human rights. It is most appalling when the victim of genital cutting violence is a newborn and has no ability to fight back or say NO. Would you want that done to you?

20,000 nerves, fine touch receptors, 6 layers of specialized skin cells, 15 square inches of erogenous skin – don't try to tell me this important sex organ has no purpose. That just doesn't happen in evolution, sorry to burst your pro-circ bubble. Wake up and stop cutting baby penises, that's sick.

[Reply](#)



Paul says:

January 25, 2011 at 3:43 am

Nicely put. I'll have to save that checklist.

[Reply](#)



Morgan says:

January 24, 2011 at 7:08 pm

Check out foregen everyone – they're raising money through donations to launch a clinical trial in foreskin regeneration that will regenerate everything lost to circumcision at foregen.org through regenerative medicine

[Reply](#)



mike carreras says:

January 26, 2011 at 1:21 am

I WANT MY FORESKIN!

[Reply](#)**mike carreras says:**

January 26, 2011 at 1:22 am

I WANT MY FORESKIN

[Reply](#)**Bob says:**

January 26, 2011 at 10:34 am

I like my circumcised dick. I like the way it LOOKS and the way it FEELS. I have absolutely NO PROBLEM with having been cut as a baby. Since I never had the experience of bacon hangin off my dick, I have no cause for regret, or longing. Its absurd what I read these neurotic obsessives say about their lost wang skin. Absurd. Its clear to me they suffer from some mental derangement they have chosen to attach to their dicks and blame their lack of appeal (due to laziness in sex and ignorance about how to earn the interest of a partner by being stimulating) to anyone unlucky enough to share their bed and their dick.

Get a clue and GROW UP.

[Reply](#)**Hugh7 says:**

January 27, 2011 at 5:21 pm

"I never had the experience of bacon hangin off my dick" Who has? The one-eyed film-maker Errol Morris talks in much the same disparaging way about three-dimensional vision.

[Reply](#)**Bix says:**

September 1, 2012 at 2:25 am

"I like my circumcised dick. I like the way it LOOKS and the way it FEELS. I have absolutely NO PROBLEM with having been cut as a baby. Since I never had the experience of bacon hangin off my dick, I have no cause for regret, or longing. Its absurd what I read these neurotic obsessives say about their lost wang skin. Absurd. Its clear to me they suffer from some mental derangement they have chosen to attach to their dicks and blame their lack of appeal (due to laziness in sex and ignorance about how to earn the interest of a partner by being stimulating) to anyone unlucky enough to share their bed and their dick.

Get a clue and GROW UP."

You're about as insensitive as your penis.

[Reply](#)**G. Greene says:**

January 26, 2011 at 3:43 pm

"Tally has been tugging on his penis for two years" has to be the greatest opening line in the history of American journalism.

[Reply](#)**Laura Novak says:**

January 26, 2011 at 3:44 pm

Thank you! I thought it was clever too!

[Reply](#)**Seymour Eliot says:**

January 26, 2011 at 7:30 pm

That Dr. Piser visibly knows nothing about intact, functioning penises. The foreskin keeps the urinary meatus sterile and the glans moist and protected from germs, contaminants, irritants, etc. MGM victims are not only deprived from 80% of their penis' nerve endings, their glans becomes keratinized and loses most of its own sensitivity. The glans is an internal organ, it is not supposed to be constantly exposed to everything. Besides, Piser completely ignores the deep trauma infant circumcision, with its excruciating, coma-inducing pain, causes. And those are not even the reasons not to circumcise; circumcision is simply immoral, whether the child still "looks intact" or not. Not your body, not your right, not your choice.

FGM is the same as MGM. Done for the same religious/traditional bullshit, have the same destructive physical and psychological results, both are an infraction of sentient beings' rights, etc. Since girls are protected from genital mutilation, it is constitutional for boys to have the same right.

Anyway, great article. It's honestly awesome to finally read a post related to circumcision that isn't "in between the lines" pro-circ (and those never back up their "arguments"~).

[Reply](#)



Goodman says:

January 27, 2011 at 4:30 am

Like Mr. Schwyzer, I was cut later in life (I was almost 18), and by then I'd already been sexually active for a few years. The operation was done at the insistence of the family doctor, whom my parents and I trusted. Unlike Schwyzer, though, I can say unequivocally that sex felt much better when I had my foreskin. That's why I have been restoring since July 2010. Restoration may not give me back the nerve endings that were removed surgically ... but it is quickly returning my glans to its normal state — moist, dekeratinized (like the inside of one's lips), and protected from friction against my clothing. And a lot of the feeling that I've been missing is absolutely returning. I can even masturbate these days — or *be* masturbated — without using lube.

Why, oh why, would we base what we do in the U.S., on problems some men might suffer in second- and third-world countries? Cleanliness is important ... and it could hardly be any easier to achieve for a foreskin owner. Are parents so g-damned lazy these days, that they can't teach their boys to run some water over and around their penises?

I don't hear about penile cancer rates being outrageously high in mostly-uncut Europe, by the way. And y'know, if baby girls' breasts were routinely removed shortly after they were born, there'd be a whole lot less breast cancer as adults.

In developed countries, there is usually no truly compelling reason to perform this surgery on an infant. If God really wanted the foreskin gone, He could eliminate it with a snap of His giant fingers. Let the boys decide for themselves, when they're old enough, whether they want to have it done.

[Reply](#)



Nigel says:

February 25, 2011 at 9:48 pm

I agree with you, but the fact that the human mind can conceive of genital cutting and act it out on babies is probably, not definitely, proof that there is no God. It is definitely a superstitious extension of religion. Believe me, I hope there is a God and that the ones who have vehemently done this to children are shown the ere of their ways. So why refer to God as "His giant fingers?" Wouldn't "he" have already used those same fingers to snap this travesty out of existence in some way? But I appreciate your thoughts on this.

[Reply](#)



George says:

February 25, 2011 at 12:07 am

Male genital mutilation, euphemistically called "circumcision", is a violation of human rights and denies males their self determination as adults. The human mind has decided to justify this abhorrent behaviour as acceptable and normal. If it were being introduced as something new today, it would be considered as ridiculous as removing fingertips to prevent hangnails and the dirt that lodges under them. One only has to refer to the Aesop's fable "The Fox Without a Tail" to see the truth. Some men must continue justifying this atrocity to make the atrocity correct in their minds. This is a really sad lesson in psychological denial and self justification, which has and will continue to sexually maim and kill uncounted and unrecognised victims, and this must stop!

[Reply](#)



Nigel says:

February 25, 2011 at 9:22 am

It sounds as if Hugo's real problem was his mind and not the skin on his penis. If one has a sex and drug addiction, that would lead to poor health and physical problems for anyone intact or not. If his penis had been mutilated at birth, it would have somehow been better despite his mental illness of addiction? What is the point that he is trying to make? If he is somehow blaming the skin on his penis for his "death's door step" condition in life, that would be post hoc ergo propter hoc logic, and quite flawed thinking. I'm not sure why this was included in the article. The only problem a penis every has is in the mind of the one who wants to cut it, and it doesn't sound as if Hugo has a very good one. However, he does have an incredible ego.

[Reply](#)



Jeff says:

June 22, 2012 at 2:15 pm

Well said Nigel. Hugo is the messed up one here — and he has no right to tell those cut at birth to get over it. He had the opportunity to try both uncut and cut while those cut at birth never get to find out for themselves. He also illudes that restoration is a perfect fix and we should go for it if we want to try uncut — while he fails to note that restoration takes 2-10 years and only brings back a portion of what was in fact ROBBED.

[Reply](#)



Jeff says:

June 22, 2012 at 3:08 pm

Hugo was really lucky to have his foreskin while he was screwing his way through all those girls. If he had been cut as a child then he never would have been able to strip away that filth and offer a faithful marriage to his current wife. What a laughable load of crap. But if it did work that way Hugo, then don't you think all of us should be left intact as children so we will have the same opportunity to cleans ourselves after we are finished sewing our wild oats. Your piece of the article makes no sense buddy — get over yourself!

[Reply](#)



Noelani says:

March 10, 2011 at 11:35 pm

Hugo said:

"It's almost like a countdown on threads like this: men's rights activists appearing to insist that FGM and male circ are really equivalent in three, two, one..."

It's like arguing with Holocaust deniers, I swear."

I have to agree that arguing with some people over the issue of infant circumcision is like arguing with Holocaust deniers. Some people are SO intent on keeping the practice of cutting baby boys' genitals going, SO intent on finding excuse after excuse after excuse that they are, indeed, very much like Holocaust deniers! No matter how much evidence they see, they are totally unwilling to accept it, while they jump on any suggestion that hundreds of circumcisions might prevent one treatable infection like ducks on a junebug. Also, Hugo, I very much resent the suggestion that those of us who want to protect children from pain and injury are in anyway comparable to the Nazis. Good grief.

There are quite a few body parts that people can live without. Since no body part is totally free of problems, there isn't anything that we couldn't have cut off of our children and find something to say was prevented in the process. You know, the nails on big toes can be very troublesome. Many people get ingrown toenails, which cause a great deal of pain and can get infected. Some people need to have very painful surgery on them. In diabetics, infected toenails can even cause gangrene and result in amputation. We could prevent a great deal of pain by just obliterating the big toenails of all babies. We wouldn't, though, because that would be ridiculous, wouldn't it?

Saying that penile cancer is unheard of in circumcised men is not only wrong, but quite irresponsible. Few men ever get penile cancer but, of those that do, some are circumcised. A common site for the cancer to start is the circumcision scar (which everyone who wasn't born with aposthia has). There

have been men whose treatment for penile cancer has been delayed because they, and/or their physicians, had heard that circumcised men couldn't get penile cancer!

Suggesting that circumcision protects against AIDS is especially irresponsible. We have all ready seen the effect of circumcision on AIDS in America. We have had some of the highest AIDS rates in the industrialized world, despite also having, by far, the highest circumcision rates among sexually active men. In the 1980s and 1990s, many American men suffered horribly and died from AIDS. Most of those men were circumcised and, in many cases, the sexual partners they had caught it from were circumcised, too. How many young men, caught in the heat of passion without a condom, will think "Oh well, I read that article that says that circumcision protects against AIDS and other STDs.", and decide to take a chance?

If Hugo, Matt, or any other men want to have part of their penises cut off, fine. That is their right and their choice to make. Children, of both sexes, have a right to make their own choices regarding what to have, or not have, done to their bodies, too. In addition, children have a right to be protected from pain and injury.

[Reply](#)



Sara says:

April 30, 2011 at 9:28 pm

I don't agree with circumcision either... It should be an adult's choice not something forced on babies.

But it's UNBELIEVABLE and incredibly obtuse to equate FGM with circumcision.

FGM removes the entire sexual organ, it literally is cutting off the clitoris. The closest equivalent would be cutting off the entire penis shaft.

You will not win people to your side by making these erroneous and incredibly disrespectful arguments that minimize the severity of what FGM is.

Also, while some argue benefits to circumcision there are NO stated benefits to FGM.

Stop this madness.

[Reply](#)



Danny says:

May 3, 2011 at 8:54 am

FGM removes the entire sexual organ, it literally is cutting off the clitoris. The closest equivalent would be cutting off the entire penis shaft.

If you really want to get down to it that's still pretty far out there. Unlike the clitoris the penis has other functions beyond sex.

No I'm not trying to say that that makes it okay to remove the clitoris I've just grown a bit aggravated by that comparison.

[Reply](#)



John Anderson says:

February 2, 2012 at 9:37 pm

There is something called type 4 female circumcision, which involves a ritualistic nick of the vagina. This is much less traumatic than a male circumcision and is not permanent like a male circumcision. The AAP in 2010 almost advocated for allowing the practice, but chose not to because of fierce opposition from feminists.

When dealing with feminists like Hugo, it's not the crime, but who the victim and the perpetrators are that is important. Women's choice is paramount even when it comes to male bodies. Before you bring up that fathers have choices too, I need to point out that there is already one male that doesn't have a choice. It's not about choice for men.

You're right FGC and MGC are not comparable. Sometimes MGC is much worse.

[Reply](#)



Danny says:

May 3, 2011 at 9:02 am

"But I've met men who were circumcised as infants who have an amazingly deep sense they were robbed of something. Dude, get over yourself!"

Schwyzzer concedes that opponents of circumcision have valid concerns when they argue that it's painful, unethical, and full of possible post-procedure complications from scarring, ulceration, and hemorrhage.

"But this idea that circumcision was this horrific violation comparable to sex abuse, and that you were deprived of something extraordinarily valuable? Having had a lot of sex both ways, I can say no. I find it ridiculous."

And there we go. Hugo just sweeping in and using his own experience to dictate what something means to other men.

As for circumcision helping against AIDS is there any proof that circumcision is more effective than proper genital hygiene and sex education (which by the way you kinda need whether you're circumcised or not)?

[Reply](#)



alberto remus galvan says:

June 14, 2011 at 4:29 pm

i dont like my circumsition. what can i do? can it get to be thet i can have a foreskin? thak you please write

[Reply](#)



ray says:

October 29, 2013 at 11:51 am

myname is ray i am restoring my foreskin i found out about this when i was looking up erection issues i came across this website restoring foreskin i thought right restoring foreskin no way but at this time i had nothing to louse. when i started in november 2012 my c1 was 1 now c1 is 5 so i wood say yes restoring foreskin is working my sensitivity is AWESOME i am on restoringforeskin.org my profile is raybec or if someone wants more informationa about restoring just email me @ rayb1054@gmail.com

[Reply](#)



Alfred C. Schram says:

June 25, 2011 at 1:50 pm

The cases of Matt and Shwyzzer involve ADULT individuals who made the decision for themselves. I object to routine infant circumcision on the basis that it is a surgery performed on a non-consenting individual, for no immediate health benefit. It does cause an irreversible alteration of the boy anatomy. After becoming an adult, it will be the individual's prerogative to decide for himself.

[Reply](#)



TLH says:

March 24, 2012 at 12:09 pm

"Even if you're against circumcision," he says, "why would you make it so that someone else couldn't do it if they wanted?"

The MGM bill wouldn't make it illegal to get circumcised if you wanted to. It's not a total ban only a partial ban for minors. If you are an adult man or woman you can still legally get circumcised even with the MGM/FGM bans in effect because they only protect children from circumcision.

[Reply](#)



Jim says:

June 21, 2012 at 3:52 pm

It's easy for someone who lived half their lifespan with a foreskin to say that it's no big deal. The guy does not have the perspective of somebody who does not know both sides of the story themselves. You could argue both sides without a clear winner, because the real issue is that the procedure is only

needed on a case by case basis, and should not be performed routinely without individual consent unless there are overwhelming evidence that circumcision would somehow save the child's life or eliminate a real source of lasting pain or discomfort. Global disease statistics (especially when they're shown to be on the very low end, with uncircumcised guys rarely having problems) shouldn't determine whether or not you get to keep your functional sexual organ parts. That's like automatic enforcement of birth rate laws. Wouldn't you rather let people have the choice, and make good decisions for themselves?

I agree about FGM— it's "worse". But that's like saying it's worse to choke to death than to get shot in the head quickly. What you call worse or better is up to the individual.

It's a matter of individual rights, forget the comparisons to FGM. People say it's the same thing because what they mean to say (or ought to be saying) is that it's a question of personal freedom. Cutting off genitalia to any degree is a violation of FREEDOM to be born into this world as you are. Whether that's a clitoris, or a foreskin, or a testicles, an earlobe, an appendix. It's a personal rights issue, the comparisons are just distractions. The "foreskin isn't really that big of a deal" comments are also distractions.

[Reply](#)



Long Hanger says:

October 26, 2012 at 7:35 pm

Imagine if women hoods were removed at child birth. I was circumcised for many years until after restoring for about 3 years. Sex is a million times better. anybody that is into this type of ritual is insane. The skin they hack off has tons of nerve endings. In addition since your cock head is covered its very sensitive and feels much better than a rough head. Never circumcise your baby, its cruel. I am a conservative and i would never do this, its sick.

[Reply](#)



Rishel says:

November 25, 2012 at 1:59 am

I don't believe that Dr Piser should have been the medical authority to speak throughout this whole article, though his input was valuable for a single side of the argument. You can't really trust the opinion of a man who makes his money performing a procedure when he makes a statement against it. The opinion of a urologist who does NOT perform circumcisions would have been more impartial and thus more valuable to the article.

Hugo's story was relevant to the article as a whole, but his opinion is invalid and hurtful when he speaks about other circumcised men. He had the benefit of being able to CHOOSE his circumcision, which most other circumcised men did not. It is completely understandable that these men would be upset at their parents and doctor who permanently altered their body against their will, much like a woman who has been raped would understandably hold ill will against her rapist. Which brings me to my next point-

Mutilation is defined as "to cut up or alter radically so as to make imperfect" or "to cut off or permanently destroy a limb or essential part", and it is generally accepted as occurring without consent. Now, what is "perfect" is certainly up for debate, especially amongst religious groups, but it seems to me that neonatal circumcision certainly meets this definition. An infant cannot give consent to having an essential part of his penis, one that has been developed to cover and protect, cut off.

The arguments in favor of neonatal circumcision are dubious at best. Protection from UTIs? Try proper diapering techniques and potty training, a good diet, and limiting bubble baths. Compare that to the potential for serious infections from the circumcision wounds, as well as excrement exposure during diapering. Better hygiene? An utter fallacy, as the foreskin is adhered to the glans well into childhood, giving the parent plenty of time to teach proper washing as the child begins to retract it on his own. STD prevention? Circumcised men can still get them, so just use a condom like all sexually active, non-monogamous people SHOULD be doing anyway. Penile cancer? Why don't we cut off female breasts at puberty or replace our lungs with artificial ones while we're at it? All other cited conditions are those that have the outstanding potential to clear up on their own with proper hygiene or with less invasive medical intervention.

To be clear, I am not against circumcision as a whole. My only "beef" is with neonatal circumcision. An infant can't even clearly communicate what they want, much less understand and consent to something that will permanently alter something as critical to their lives as their sex organs. If a grown man chooses to have a circumcision like Hugo did, regardless of his reason for it, that is his choice.

[Reply](#)



check my reference says:

January 27, 2013 at 11:34 pm

Ahaa, its fastidious discussion regarding this article at this place at this blog, I have read all that, so at this time me also commenting at this place.

[Reply](#)



Kalin says:

January 28, 2013 at 9:11 am

"The smell of smegma (the cheese-like secretion found under an unwashed foreskin)"
Guess what, girls and women have smegma too. Under their clitoral hood. The clitoris and surrounding area has to be washed just like the glans of an uncircumcised penis. The labia have to be pulled aside just like the foreskin has to be pulled back.
But you don't see anyone in the western mainstream world saying that the labia and clitoral hood should be cut off in infancy.

[Reply](#)



Mark says:

February 17, 2013 at 6:15 am

Why should I suffer for my parents' willful ignorance? How dare they decide this for me without my consent? My father believed the hygiene myth so much, he kept himself intact – how cruel.

Its cruel that I cannot experience a full body orgasm and its cruel that my parents can come between the intimacy of myself and my partner. She feels the difference too and enough women have commented online how they prefer intact men.

Who on earth gave these people the right to even debate this??
Its not their decision to make – its only mine!! Got it?

We are victims of genital mutilation. One day this will be seen as the barbaric (religious/commercial) ritual that it is.

[Reply](#)



Mark says:

February 17, 2013 at 10:39 am

"I did it for two reasons: to deal with frenular tearing and scarring, and to symbolize this commitment to enduring monogamy." – Hugo Schwyzer

Just goes to show that Phds do not necessarily "equate" good logic. I mean, seriously, frenular tearing can be treated, and a circumcision to symbolise a new relationship bond?

Hugo Schwyzer does not seem to see the problem here – he was allowed to make that decision as an adult. I was not.

For him to make great statements about how a foreskin is not as important as the hood of a clitoris is just plain ridiculous.

It is still child abuse. A German court of Law in Cologne has already ruled it as such.

[Reply](#)



roy b says:

October 29, 2013 at 2:27 pm

i think restoring your foreskin is awesome. guys you have idea how much better sex can be after being

restored. the only guys that knows the differents is one that has ben restored .even a uncut man can't no the difference. luckily now us cut guys can be fixed. and four you uncut guys you only have to say thanks to your dad four not having you cut because he made the right choice . and yes i did not 18 years ago i had my son cut because i didn't no better i talk to alot of people about restoring. the only one i had a problem talking to is my son i told him i am sorry. restoring is his choice if he wants to i told him i wood pay for all the devices. i don't no if he is restoring or not. some people can't talk about this .the only thing i can say is restoring your foreskin works its awesome it will take time but it will work thais to things in restoring foreskin. restoring and retaining .you can just use a retainer to see its something you want to do. when you use just a retainer your only changing the sensitivity if you don't like how it feels. just let it go back to how it was . i haven't talked to one guy that started to restore that didn't find it AWESOME

thanks roy

if you have a question email me royb5702@gmail.com

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Trackbacks

The Foreskin Renaissance | The Good Man | MensHealth.com says:

January 18, 2011 at 2:59 pm

[...] After 11 years of tugging and frustration, "Matt" gets re-circumcised. Twice. Read more here. [...]

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Our very own Tally in the news! - Penis Forum says:

January 18, 2011 at 8:48 pm

[...] in a new online magazine titled "The Good Men Project". Here is a link>>> The Good Men Project: Article and interview with Tally Please congratulate Tally and let him know how we appreciate all the hard work he has done to help [...]

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Foreskin Restoration article on The Good Men Project - Penis Forum says:

January 19, 2011 at 12:19 am

[...] Restoration article on The Good Men Project The Foreskin Renaissance, January 18, 2011 in The Good Men Project Magazine I was interviewed for this foreskin restoration [...]

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The Freak With the Foreskin: Why I OKed My Son's Circumcision — The Good Men Project Magazine says:

January 20, 2011 at 3:00 pm

[...] The Foreskin Renaissance [...]

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Foreskin Man to the Rescue — The Good Men Project Magazine says:

February 3, 2011 at 1:35 pm

[...] Created by Matthew Hess, president of MGMBill.org, Foreskin Man is a product of Hess' mission to prevent infant male circumcision. Like his character, Hess currently works in San Diego, but instead of donning a cape and plasma boots, he is pushing the Male Genital Mutilation (MGM) Bill to ensure government protection against forced male circumcision. Hess has even been restoring his own foreskin. [...]

[Reply](#)

The Return of the Foreskins | PIBOSE: Ancient Secret for Men Revealed says:

February 14, 2011 at 10:05 am

[...] Recently, an interesting article about a so called "Foreskin Renaissance" has been brought to my attention. Follow this link to read it. [...]

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Lloyd Schofield wants circumcision for minors banned in San Francisco — The Good Men Project Magazine says:

March 8, 2011 at 1:49 pm

[...] The Foreskin Renaissance [...]

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Are you circumcised? One Australian on Twitter has asked dozens of celebrities — The Good Men Project Magazine says:

May 13, 2011 at 11:58 am

[...] January here at GMPM, we ran the most comprehensive and entertaining story ever written on the foreskin restoration movement (yes, you read that right, foreskin restoration is real—so real it has its own movement), [...]

[Reply](#)

Mrs. Palin's Mangina: on the pregnancy hoax, feminism, and baby Trig at Hugo Schwyzer says:

June 14, 2011 at 7:35 pm

[...] Novak, the writer who interviewed me for a story on circumcision at the Good Men Project, has been writing a great deal lately about the so-called "Sarah [...]"

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Prestashop Templates says:

November 16, 2011 at 3:13 am

Trackback Link...

[...] Here are some of the sites we recommend for our visitors[...]...

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Female genital mutilation and male circumcision: time to confront the double standard | Practical Ethics says:

February 17, 2014 at 9:38 pm

[...] by resentful, circumcised men: here, here, here, here, and here. This man lost his penis. Several thousand men are attempting "foreskin restoration," which is an arduous process of stretching skin from [...]

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