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## Circumcision Services for Baby Boys in Tower Hamlets

**A guide on choosing the right option for your son**

If you are considering having your son circumcised this leaflet can help you decide which service to use.

## What you need to know

- Although most boys recover well with no problems, like all operations circumcision carries a risk of harm. You should fully consider the risk and if you still want to proceed carefully choose your practitioner.
- The NHS only pays for medically necessary circumcisions — these are rare and do not include operations carried out for religious or cultural purposes.
- The General Medical Council (GMC) recognises that male circumcision can be carried out for religious and cultural reasons.
- We recommend that you check that the doctor carrying out the procedure is registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and that the service you decide to use is quality assured by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- You will most likely need to pay for the circumcision — ensure you have agreed the total price in writing before the procedure.

## Age

We recommend your son's circumcision is done when he is as young as possible. This leaflet only applies to circumcisions performed for boys under one year of age. If your son is older than 1 year or you are considering circumcision in adulthood, it is not advisable to have the circumcision outside a hospital setting, so please discuss your options with your GP.

## Consent

- Both parents and/or carers with parental responsibility must give consent before the operation happens. Consent means you want to have your son circumcised and that the operation and potential risks have been explained to you.

- You should feel free to ask any questions. All good practitioners should be happy to answer your questions. You must feel confident in the practitioner you use.
- The practitioner should ask you about your son's health and your family's health history before doing the circumcision. Your son should be in good health before the circumcision.

## Where can I go to have my baby son circumcised?

There are a range of CQC registered circumcision practitioners who can perform operations in Tower Hamlets or other areas.

For their details, please [visit \*www.cqc.org.uk/search\*](http://www.cqc.org.uk/search) and type in "circumcision".

## Being present during the circumcision

If you want to be with your son when the circumcision is performed you need to talk about this with the person who will be doing the circumcision. Some, not all, practitioners are happy for you to be present, so discuss this when you first contact them.

## Clean & sterile

- The place should be clean. Sterile instruments should be used, in order to reduce the risk of your son developing an infection. A good practitioner will use equipment and techniques designed to make the operation as safe as possible.
- You may want to make the circumcision part of a family celebration, but remember; circumcision is an operation and needs to be performed in a suitable place that is quiet and clean with sterile equipment.

## Pain management

Having a circumcision may be painful for your son. You should be told about how the pain will be managed during the circumcision and how to reduce his pain at home afterwards.

## Aftercare

- Your son should be kept at the premises for at least 30 minutes after bleeding from the circumcision has stopped. The staff should talk you through what happens next and how to care for your son. When you go home you should be given a detailed leaflet about how to look after your son, including when and where to seek help and any signs to look out for. You should be given a contact number to use if you have any concerns- this should include a number to contact out of office hours
- If you are worried about your son after the circumcision, you should immediately contact the practitioner. If you cannot get in touch with them, or are not happy with their advice, you should ring the **NHS 111** helpline or take your son to your local A&E.
- Remember if you arrive for the circumcision and you are not happy with anything or worried about your son's health for any reason, you do not need to go through with the circumcision at this time. Any good practitioner should listen to your worries and rearrange or cancel if that is what you wish.

## Complaints

If you are unhappy about the service you received first speak to the practitioner that did the circumcision. If you are not happy with their response you can contact your local NHS PALS service.

These organisations will advise you of what you need to do:

[www.towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk/contact/complaints-and-comments.htm](http://www.towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk/contact/complaints-and-comments.htm)

## Female Genital cutting

Female genital cutting has no medical benefits and is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) — you can be prosecuted for having this arranged either in the UK or any other country.

## Child safety

If you are worried or have concerns about a child or a young person, who you think may be abused, neglected or harmed, please call the Duty Worker at the local Safeguarding team. If your call is between 9am–5pm, please dial 020 7364 2972 / 3859 / 5601 / 5606 and if your call is after 5pm, please call 020 7364 4079.

If you are concerned about an adult who works with or has direct contact with children in their place of work, either as a paid staff member or volunteer — please contact the **Child Protection Advice Line** on 020 7364 3444. [www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/](http://www.childrenandfamiliestrust.co.uk/the-lscb/)

## For further information

On circumcision services provided in Tower Hamlets please visit: [www.towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk/getinvolved](http://www.towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk/getinvolved)

Or send your enquiries or feedback to: [info@towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk](mailto:info@towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk)

## Some questions you might like to ask when choosing a circumcision service:

| Question   | What to look for  |
|--|---|
| Does the provider do lots of circumcisions?                                | The more they do, usually the safer the procedure is. The minimum should be 20 per year, but the higher number, the better.   |
| Is the provider registered with the <b>Care Quality Commission (CQC)</b> ? | This is the regulator for healthcare providers and all circumcision services with doctors or nurses should be registered<br><a href="http://www.cqc.org.uk">www.cqc.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 03000 616161 |

| Question   | What to look for   |
|--|--|
| What are the qualifications of the individuals who perform the circumcision?   | Check that the Doctors are registered with the <b>General Medical Council (GMC)</b><br><a href="http://www.gmc-uk.org">www.gmc-uk.org</a><br>Tel: 0161 923 6602  |
|  | If the procedure is being undertaken by a nurse that they are registered with the <b>Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)</b><br><a href="http://www.nmc-uk.org">www.nmc-uk.org</a><br>Tel: 020 7637 7181 |
| How many different people will provide care and services to your son?          | Will doctors, nurses or other kinds of staff be looking after you son?<br>Will there be a doctor on site?  |
| Does the provider offer literature explaining its services and fees?           | Ask to see this in advance and ask for anything you do not understand to be explained. Don't be afraid to ask questions.   |
| Are they willing to discuss special needs you may have?                        | Make sure they listen and act on any needs you have.   |
| Are you treated with respect when inquiring about available care and services? | Clinical services should always treat you with respect.  |
| Are they sensitive to your cultural values and beliefs?                        |  |

| Question  | What to look for   |
|---|--|
| What kind of aftercare do they provide?   | You should stay at the service for at least 30 minutes. They should provide a staffed 24hr helpline number or named member of staff for you to contact once you leave. |
| When are the procedures performed?  | If a procedure is carried out towards the end of the week, does the service provide support over the weekend?  |
| How does the provider ensure the confidentiality of health information for you or your family?  | They should use a secure computer or records system.   |
| What are the costs for each service?  | These should be clearly explained in writing.  |
| Are they in line with what other providers charge for the same service?   | You should consider asking a number of services for their cost.  |
| How will you be billed?<br>Will all costs and payment options associated with your care plan be consistently explained and outlined on your bill? | You should consider whether you pay up front or receive an invoice afterwards.   |