

Cash Report

What should the ideal circumcision age be? Seventy nine years old elective circumcision

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ABSTRACT

Ideal circumcision age is still a controversial topic. Patient's constantly delaying circumcision due to environmental factors and sense of shame which stands out with aging is an important problem. In our case study we wanted to present the 79 year old patient we circumcised due to social reasons as the oldest circumcision case in literature, providing current publications. Seventy-nine year old male patient who wanted to be circumcised applied to our polyclinic. The patient who did not define any significant complaints stated that he wanted to be circumcised due to social reasons. He stated that his first wife died and he wanted to be circumcised before his second marriage since his wife demanded it and he didn't want to die in this condition. In the physical examination made, coronal hypospadias and excess foreskin were observed. The patient was surgically circumcised under spinal anesthesia with sleeve technique. Hypospadias surgery was not made since the patient didn't want hypospadias intervention. In postoperative 15th hour, the patient was discharged since he was clinically healing. We don't recommend circumcision in neonatal age group due to the reasons we mentioned above and the castration phobia in 3-6 age group. We think it is ideal to circumcise in age groups other than that and under 12 years of age. We wanted to present the oldest elective circumcision case to the current literature and give information about the ideal circumcision age with this case presentation.

Keywords: Circumcision, Hypospadias, Circumcision age

INTRODUCTION

Circumcision was described for the first time as a surgical intervention about 6 thousand years ago in a wall relief in Ankh-Mahor temple of Ancient Egyptian period.¹ Circumcision is one of the most common operations in the world.² It is the cutting process of the preputium surrounding glans penis or the piece of skin full of mucosa called prepuce. It is estimated that one out of three males in the world is circumcised.³ Circumcision generally has three indications. The most common indications are religious reasons, but it is also used for urgent medical indications and prophylactic reasons.⁴

In societies where circumcision is very common and traditional, it is not regarded as a surgical operation and is done in inappropriate environments.⁵ The fact that circumcision is done by non-experts in inappropriate conditions with inadequate information and experience increases the complication possibility and sometimes results in irrecoverable tissue and organ losses.

Ideal circumcision age is still a controversial topic. Patient's constantly delaying circumcision due to environmental factors and sense of shame which stands out with aging is an important problem.⁶

In our case study we wanted to present the 79 year old patient we circumcised due to social reasons as the oldest circumcision case in literature, providing current publications.

CASE REPORT

Seventy-nine year old male patient who wanted to be circumcised applied to our polyclinic. The patient who did not define any significant complaints stated that he wanted to be circumcised due to social reasons. He stated that his first wife died and he wanted to be circumcised before his second marriage since his wife demanded it and he didn't want to die in this condition. In the physical examination made, coronal hypospadias and excess foreskin were observed. He told that the circumciser in the village told that he was half-circumcised due to hypospadias and couldn't decide about circumcising or not and then the patient ran away from the procedure.

The patient was surgically circumcised under spinal anaesthesia with sleeve technique. Hypospadias surgery was not made since the patient didn't want hypospadias intervention. Images of the patient before and after the surgery are available in Figures 1 and 2.

In postoperative 15th hour, the patient was discharged since he was clinically healing.



Figure 1: Preoperative hypospadias and uncircumcised penis.

DISCUSSION

Circumcision is one of the most common surgical operations in boys and is a simple and reliable operation in healthy people when done by educated people.⁷ Certain medical indications of circumcision are as pathological phimosis, paraphimosis, some penis traumas and recurrent urinary tract infections in children. Apart from this, physiological phimosis, very long foreskin, recurrent balanitis, balanoposthitis and congenital anomaly in urinary system are relative indications for circumcision.

There are studies showing that circumcision decreases urinary tract infections, local penis infections, penis cancer and HIV contagiousness. Also the fact that there is no sexual dysfunction in circumcised males is also shown in studies.⁸

Circumcision is generally accepted as an advantageous surgical operation for males. World Health Organization (WHO) approves circumcision as long as it is done under appropriate conditions.



Figure 2: Appearance of penis after circumcision.

In western communities, circumcision is mostly done in neonatal period.⁹ Children focus on their genital organs and discover their sexual identity between 3-6 years of age. The child discovers that every individual doesn't have a penis and is afraid of losing it. 3-6 age group is not a suitable age for circumcision due to castration phobia and also the children over 3 years of age are generally afraid of circumcision operation unless they are prepared well in psychological terms.^{6,10} A painful intervention in sexual organ in this period would cause psychological problems hard to overcome in the future. Circumcision is a selective surgical operation if not made due to medical obligations and it is important for the kid not to experience this uneasy and hurting process at an age he would suffer more so that it won't stay in his memories. Age limit for adolescent period in which hypothalamo-hypophyseal axis is completely activated in children is accepted as 12 in males.¹¹ Also when age groups were examined in a study, it was observed that 94,7% of 3602 cases included in the study had circumcision before 12 years of age.¹²

With aging, as social and environmental factors become important and the sense of shame becomes evident, the delaying of circumcision and making an effort to hide the situation from the family and the surrounding are observed.⁶

Especially in Muslim communities, circumcision is seen as an obligation due to religious factors and uncircumcised people have concerns about not being accepted by the community.

Our patient hid this situation from his surrounding after childhood and including his children no one knew about it, except his wife. But fear of death, religious factors, relationship with a new partner and feeling of shame caused him to feel that he should be circumcised.

Hypospadias which is one of the most common congenital problems in childhood is observed once in 125-300 alive male births.¹³ Coronal hypospadias caused the delaying of circumcise in the patient's childhood and then he completely ran away from the operation and the situation was hidden.

Neonatal circumcision is preferred more in western societies under general anaesthesia [9]. In a study made in United States of America, it was reported that in the hospital where the study was made 7.4% of all child urology applications were complaints about newborn circumcision and that nearly 4.7% of all the operations made in child surgery clinic were circumcision complication repairs.¹⁴ The most commonly observed complications after neonatal circumcision are substandard circumcision and revision necessity due to this and presence of concealed penis and cohesion after the operation due to excess suprapubic fat tissue of the child.¹⁵ There are studies showing that in neonatal circumcisions, general complication rate is lower than circumcisions in other age groups.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

We don't recommend circumcision in neonatal age group due to the reasons we mentioned above and the castration phobia in 3-6 age group. We think it is ideal to circumcise in age groups other than that and under 12 years of age. We wanted to present the oldest elective circumcision case to the current literature and give information about the ideal circumcision age with this case presentation.

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