

The Human Foreskin

The foreskin is not an optional extra for a man's body, or an accident. It is an integral, functioning, important component of a man's penis. An eye does not function properly without an eyelid – and nor does a penis without its foreskin.

Among other things, the foreskin provides:

- **Protection** The foreskin fully covers the glans (head) of the flaccid penis, thereby protecting it from damage and harsh rubbing against abrasive agents (underwear, etc.) and maintaining its sensitivity
- **Sexual Sensitivity** The foreskin provides direct sexual pleasure in its own right, as it contains the highest concentration of nerve endings on the penis
- **Lubrication** The foreskin, with its unique mucous membrane, permanently lubricates the glans, thus improving sensitivity and aiding smoother intercourse
- **Skin-Gliding During Erection** The foreskin facilitates the *gliding* movement of the skin of the penis up and down the penile shaft and over the glans during erection and sexual activity
- **Varied Sexual Sensation** The foreskin facilitates direct stimulation of the glans during sexual activity by its interactive contact with the sensitive glans
- **Immunological Defense** The foreskin helps clean and protect the glans via the secretion of anti-bacterial agents

What circumcision takes away

The foreskin is at the heart of male sexuality. Circumcision almost always results in a **diminution of sexual sensitivity**; largely because removing the foreskin cuts away the most nerve-rich part of the penis (up to 80% of the penis's nerve endings reside in the foreskin) [1].

The following anatomy is amputated with circumcision:

- The Taylor “ridged band” (sometimes called the “frenar band”), *the primary erogenous zone of the male body*. This unique, highly specialized and exquisitely sensitive structure is equipped with soft ridges designed by nature to stimulate the female's inner labia and G-spot during intercourse
- The frenulum, the highly erogenous V-shaped tethering structure on the underside of the head of the penis
- 20,000 specialized erotogenic nerve endings of several types, which can feel slight variations in pressure and stretching, subtle changes in temperature, and fine gradations in texture
- Thousands of coiled fine-touch receptors called Meissner's corpuscles, which are also found in the fingertips

Not only is a staggering amount of nerve tissue lost in circumcision, even further loss of sensation occurs in the glans after circumcision. Since circumcision deprives the glans of its protective mucous membrane, the glans dry out and is left unprotected against external abrasion. To shield itself from the pain and discomfort of abrasion, it keratinizes, forming a tough, harder outer surface that buries the nerve endings of the glans deeper under the surface and renders them less sensitive to touch. Studies now show [2] as does the empirical evidence of men who undergo circumcision as adults a reduction of sexual sensitivity in circumcised men, compared to their intact equivalents.

Most importantly, **circumcision renders a penis dysfunctional**. Circumcision removes 30 – 50% of the skin of the penis including the complex double layer of the foreskin, most of the nerve-endings (found on the foreskin), the mucosal inner lining of the foreskin, and part of, or even in some cases the entirety of, the frenulum. As one might expect after such a significant amputation, a penis subject to such interference cannot function normally ever again. Many adolescents circumcised at birth experience painfully tight skin upon erection, simply because there is not enough skin left after circumcision to allow proper expansion to occur. Furthermore, many circumcised men find their level of sexual sensitivity diminish drastically as they age, with their glans becoming less and less sensitive to touch.

An intact man experiences sexual intercourse very differently from a circumcised man; first, because he has the feeling of all the nerve endings on the foreskin and a very sensitive glans that is only exposed to touch during sex, and secondly because the presence of a foreskin allows for the abundant skin present along the shaft to glide onto the glans, providing its own stimulation without the need for external lubrication. By contrast, a circumcised man's penile shaft skin is stretched tight during erection, allowing for no stimulation of the glans by the gentle backwards and forwards movement of foreskin. Furthermore, he feels nothing of the stretching and relaxing of the foreskin and frenulum as the skin of the penis is pushed forward and back during intercourse, both of which are a major component of the pleasure and ejaculatory response in intact males. The absence of many of the nerves that were once on the penis means that the circumcised male feels much less, which also explains the very common observation that circumcised men take much longer to reach orgasm, that is so because they cannot feel nearly as much. Finally, following orgasm, the foreskin of an intact man covers his glans again, preventing it from being touched while at its most sensitive and keeping it comfortable, whereas a circumcised man's glans remains exposed after intercourse to painful, abrasive contact with the world outside.

Thirdly, circumcision results in a **damaged physical appearance** a permanent scar and the constant exposure and drying out of an internal organ (the glans) to the open air and abrasion from clothes and other outside objects. That altered appearance when not chosen by the individual can lead to body image problems, shame, and embarrassment to boys and men who have, against their will, been visibly made different from the majority of the world's men. This is especially so in countries where circumcision is no longer considered normal (i.e. the whole world except for the United States, South Korea, Israel, and Islamic countries). No one likes the idea of scarring anywhere on one's body. The idea of a scar at the place of most intimacy, sensitivity and psychological importance, especially when it was unnecessarily imposed, and in conditions of pain is particularly upsetting.

To see more of the results of circumcision, go to our educational [Images & Information](#) (figs. 5 and 6).

The foreskin: getting it back, getting sensitivity back

Regenerating the foreskin has two main aims:

- To **reverse the harm** done by circumcision
- To **bring back** the sexual sensitivity, normal function, bodily completeness and psychological well-being of the healthy adult male that were damaged by circumcision, allowing the once-circumcised man to function normally in sexual intercourse (and in daily life) as nature intended

No human foreskin has ever been regenerated by medical science. At best, foreskin restoration therapies can stretch the normal shaft skin left after circumcision to mimic the effect of a foreskin (see [Current Therapies](#)) but this never replaces the unique properties and functions of the real foreskin with which every baby boy is born.

Foregen is dedicated to changing that. **Foregen's** mission is to [harness biomedical knowledge](#) on dermal regrowth to the field of genital reconstruction for circumcised men, and to produce a therapy which will bring back the original tissue, function, and structure destroyed at circumcision. Only when true foreskin regeneration is possible can the harms done by circumcision be reversed – and the benefits of being intact regained.

[1]P. Fleiss and F. Hodges, What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Circumcision, 2002. See <http://www.amazon.com/What-Your-Doctor-About-Circumcision/dp/0446678805> for a preview.

[2]Sorrells, et al, Fine-touch pressure thresholds in the adult penis, British Journal of Urology International, Volume 99: Pages 864-869, (April 2007).

See http://www.nocirc.org/touch-test/bju_6685.pdf.