



**EXPERIENCES OF MEN
FOLLOWING CIRCUMCISION
PROCEDURES**

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#1

15SQUARE.ORG.UK



**AN INSIGHT INTO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL
& PHYSICAL IMPACTS IN LATER LIFE**

Some circumcisions that are considered “successful” leave the recipient with significant distress. The frequency of this distress is unknown; however, the *existence* of circumcision trauma has been recognised for many years.

“A remedy [for masturbation] which is almost always successful in small boys is circumcision, especially when there is any degree of phimosis. The operation should be performed by a surgeon without administering an anesthetic, as the brief pain attending the operation will have a salutary effect upon the mind, especially if it be connected with the idea of punishment... In females, the author has found the application of pure carbolic acid to the clitoris an excellent means of allaying the abnormal excitement.”

- John Harvey Kellogg, M.D., *Plain Facts for Young and Old*; Segner & Condit; 1877

These following stories are the accounts of men or their loved ones who wish to have their voices heard. Many are graphic in nature, and some have explicit sexual content too. 15 Square have kept these stories in as they provide an insight into the complex psychology surrounding circumcision and the impact that it can have upon the development of sexual psychology. These stories are not indicative of *all* of the men’s cases that 15 Square deal with. The men we help come from diverse backgrounds, old and young, religious and atheist, heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or (often due to their traumas) completely Asexual.

The one factor that unites these people is that they are not happy with their circumcision.

The views expressed in these stories belong to the writers alone and do not reflect the opinions of 15 Square. Any editing has been purely grammatical, or to clarify the details of the statements made. Names have also been removed to anonymise these stories.

Useful Links & Public Stories

<https://15square.org.uk/2020/03/24/we-want-to-hear-your-story/>

-This article is what prompted the people to write to us with their stories

<https://15square.org.uk/2019/07/03/community-forums/>

-This is where you can see the forums of men who have clearly been affected, moderated externally and hosted on Reddit. A treasure trove of insight.

<https://15square.org.uk/2019/05/28/bbc-news-my-penis-was-mutilated/>

-Ashley Humphrey's story

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/stories-49085138/circumcision-my-penis-causes-me-constant-pain>

-Avon Cornish's story

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-48057183>

-“I'm scared of my own penis”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-47292307>

-Alex Hardy's story

<https://www.reddit.com/r/CircumcisionGrief/>

"My dad's entire family is of the Jewish faith, and the idea of forgoing circumcision was never even an option that dawned on him."

I saw your post on Reddit. Feel free to publish the following letter!

I am twenty years old, and I was genitally mutilated within the first several days of my life. My dad's entire family is of the Jewish faith, and the idea of forgoing circumcision was never even an option that dawned on him. In fact, I was cut by the same mohel who mutilated my dad more than thirty years earlier, a fact which my grandparents are quite proud of.

I don't remember a time before I knew I was circumcised. My parents always told me that the foreskin was a superfluous piece of skin that did little more than cause frequent infections, and that circumcision was very important to men's health. For years I took those words at face value.

However, within the last few years I came across forums about the morals of circumcision. At first I was perplexed. Surely removing a superfluous piece of skin wasn't that huge a deal, right? However, more research revealed to me the truth about circumcision and the foreskin. It turns out that not only are the supposed infections caused by the foreskin are rare and easily preventable, but the foreskin is one of the more erogenous zones of the male body, and that it protects the glans of the penis to ensure it is comfortable and of an appropriate sensitivity. Suddenly a lot of the struggles I was facing made sense. I always assumed that chafing against underwear was a universal part of the male experience, but in actuality there's supposed to be a part of the body protecting from that. I always thought masturbation was uncomfortable for everyone, but it turned out that if my body wasn't mutilated my foreskin would prevent this feeling. (That isn't just an unfortunate side effect by the way; the complications which circumcision brings to the act of masturbation are the very reason why circumcision was popularized in the sex-negative early twentieth century world!) I assumed that the male body simply wasn't equipped to be especially sexually satisfied, but there's actually a huge piece of skin that's supposed to bring pleasure. And I thought that the penis was simply an ugly, awkward looking part of the body, but seeing pictures of intact penises made me realize that the body part in its natural state looks much less weird. And why wouldn't it? The glans isn't supposed to be an external organ. If one was to peel the skin off of one's fingers, the resultant fingers wouldn't look so pleasant to look at either.

I love my parents very much, so I hate to face the truth about what they allowed to happen to me. I can't believe they let me lose the vast majority of my sexual pleasure through an extremely painful process that most tribes in the prehistoric era already recognized was unjust. I don't blame them; they were raised in an environment that normalized the disgusting procedure. I'm sure most slave owners two hundred years ago didn't see their

actions as morally wrong either. I'm sure parents who foot bound their daughters in olden China didn't think they were doing anything wrong either. But that didn't stop the countries from speaking up against the injustices, and now that we're removed from the societal sugar coating of past eras we can recognize how horrible those practices are. My hope is that by the end of my lifetime, my children and grandchildren will be saying the same thing about male genital mutilation.

"I envy men with whole penises. They have better sensation, function, appearance, and they do not have the knowledge that someone violated their right to their own body by strapping them down and cutting them..."

It oftentimes feels like nobody outside of the few online circumcision communities are listening to our feelings."

I saw your post in r/circumcisiongrief. It oftentimes feels like nobody outside of the few online circumcision communities are listening to our feelings. Thank you for helping to remind us relatively few dissenters that people really do care.

1. Your age.

I am nineteen. My name is --.

2. Your background and reason for circumcision, if known.

My parents are Catholic, but I've spoken with my mother face to face about why she circumcised me. It boiled down to them wanting me to look like my father, everyone they knew having done it, and them believing that it wasn't wrong and would protect me from STD's and HIV.

3. How old were you when you received your circumcision?

Short story: 6.5 months old, give or take a few days.

Long Story: I was 14 weeks premature, so they had to wait before circumcising me unlike a normal baby which they cut after a day or two. To make a long story short I am completely healthy and have none of the severe health defects that a baby born that premature usually has. My parents said it was a miracle that I was healthy. That just makes it worse that the second I was out of immediate danger and they knew I was perfectly healthy, they went ahead and chopped off part of my penis when nothing was medically wrong with it. I

hypothesize that the difference in age between the average baby when they are mutilated and when I was mutilated has resulted in a different amount of flesh being retained on my penis due to my growth over 6.5 months.

4. How do you feel circumcision has affected your life?

I envy men with whole penises. They have better sensation, function, appearance, and they do not have the knowledge that someone violated their right to their own body by strapping them down and cutting them. I got a high and loose cut so the skin rests just barely on the corona of my genitalia when flaccid. The difference in sensation, look, and function, between that skin which has had no foreskin protecting it my whole life and the corona of my genitals that has had some protection is enormously noticeable.

5. How has your circumcision affected your relationships with others, (e.g. partners, parents or religious/cultural community?)

I don't hate my parents for cutting me, but I'll never let go of my kernel of resentment. They thought it would help and protect me. The doctor said it was fine after all. How were they to know any different? It's been a factor in not fully embracing Catholicism.

6. As many other details and thoughts that you wish to share

It is NOT antisemitic/anti-Islamic for me to want to keep a child from ritual genital cutting, be they a boy or a girl.

My sister will be presumably having children soon. I agonize over the fact that she will very likely circumcise any boys she has and that no matter what I do to try to persuade her to consider leaving their bodies alone that she will do it anyways.

I am currently non surgically restoring my foreskin with a DTR (Dual Tension Restorer). What I eventually get will never be as good as what I was born with but it's the only option I have.

Everyone has a goal in life. Some people want riches. Some people want to spread the word of god. Some people want to find love. Mine is distinctly more unpopular. I intend to see circumcision abolished in my lifetime and I am deathly serious about it.

"I feel I am missing out on something as the foreskin has all the nerve endings in it, and the head of my penis has become less sensitive due to the rubbing on my underwear."

I would like to share my story about my Circumcision. I was about 13 years old when I had the procedure done for medical reasons.

I can remember it being very painful after I woke up from the operation. But once it all healed I thought nothing more about it. Except about a year later when I had a cyst on my penis from where there was still some matter in my scars.

That was all sorted out. And again I thought nothing more of it. Until I became sexually active. Since then I feel I am missing out on something as the foreskin has all the nerve endings in it. And the head of my penis has become less sensitive due to the rubbing on my underwear.

I am nearly 40 years old. And I feel Circumcision should not be done unless it is absolutely necessary. I had to have it done for medical reasons.

But for religion and cosmetic reasons, I think it should stop.

“Those who perform circumcisions have created generations of men who are embittered, confused, distrustful, angry, and sexually shattered by having their choice and bodily integrity ignored and their experiences, like the foreskin itself: erased.”

Hi 15 Square,

Below you'll find my experience living as a circumcised male, how it has affected me, and how I can move forward from it. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am glad organizations like this are listening to men when so much of their experiences with circumcision have been silenced or ignored. I'm of course open to suggestions for edits, etc.

Soon after my birth, a doctor came in to my mother's hospital room and recommended I be circumcised "to prevent infection" (according to my mother). I was taken to the nursery where my legs and arms were strapped down and my foreskin forcibly excised from my genitals. Parents weren't allowed in the nursery. I don't remember the pain, being so young. But then, that seemed to be the point of doing it at that age. Years later, I asked my mother what her thinking was during that moment. Her response was, "What? Are you all pissed off you were circumcised?" I think her reaction is common among parents who didn't think they had done anything wrong at the time, among parents reluctant to face the possibility that they may have made a grave and ghastly error, among other men conditioned to interpret their circumcision as a cosmetic blessing, among women used to seeing only - and therefore normalizing - circumcised penises. The core reaction behind my mother's words is symptomatic of cultures that have learned to ignore male infant suffering and to scoff at those who have awakened to the knowledge of what was done to them, and continues to be done to men and women across the world.

At the time, my mother had legal consent over my body. I cannot blame her; I cannot forgive her. A parent's primary responsibility is to protect and guard their child from harm. At all costs. Parents who surrender their children to doctors who perpetuate falsities about circumcision's "benefits" have effectually abrogated their duty to their children. My mother blindly trusted in doctors who were perhaps themselves just as blind as she was. "That's just what was done," she told me. "That's what everyone does." Without thought, without question. Ignorance explains; it doesn't excuse. I want to be understanding, but so much has already been lost.

We need a new cultural assumption. We must assume that the parent is not the patient; the child is. To willingly cause harm to a non-consenting human should be seen as a gross violation of the very idea of medicinal practice.

I have had in my life numerous (hetero)sexual relationships. Over the years, my partners seemed to be experiencing an intensity I myself never felt. At first, I couldn't explain why my glans was virtually insensitive. Why it was painful after ejaculation. Why I wasn't experiencing what was so common for others. I was raised to believe circumcision was normal, so I assumed something must be wrong with me. After all, the penis is only a delivery system for sperm and men naturally don't experience sexual desire or pleasure the same way women do - so I was told. My path to educating myself about my own sexual anatomy was long, a journey of doubt and frustration and shock, a journey that I hope one day will issue in some form of acceptance for the body that was left me.

Much of this self-education happens in silence; many turn off when you raise the subject or try to get their viewpoint. I've heard the myths and bromides and dismissals. "It's like cutting the umbilical cord." "It's just a little snip." "It's cleaner and girls like it more." "Well, your father and all your brothers are circumcised, so...." "You don't even remember it." "It prevents penile cancer and AIDS." "Babies cry, it's what they do." "Get over it." I have viewed male circumcisions before. And the clinical coldness with which the doctor or religious practitioner performs the procedure, while the newborn screams and fights against his restraints, fills me with the kind of disgust toward ideologies that are allowed to go unquestioned. That this procedure is allowed to continue to this day - language buckles under its horror and stupidity.

Whenever I look at my sexual organ - the absent frenulum, the chafed and desensitized glans, the scar tissue that runs along the shaft to the dead pink of my senseless corona - I am reminded of what was taken from me, and the life and experiences I will never have. I see the stranger who strapped me down, covered me with a sheet so that my infant genitals were available for a procedure few people see or understand, and I see my foreskin sliced away from my body, discarded or sold or left to fester in a bin before the trash is taken out to some anonymous lot. Those who perform circumcisions have created generations of men who are embittered, confused, distrustful, angry, and sexually shattered by having their choice and bodily integrity ignored and their experiences, like the foreskin itself, erased.

I am angry. And no amount of theological justification or medical insistence on "hygienic purposes" or "prevention of infection" or any amount of social normalization of male genital

mutilation can redress what I and so many have been robbed of. Victims of insidious harvesting practices. Victims of gross misinformation. Victims of parents who believe they "own" their child's body. I cannot "get over it." Circumcision is not normal, and I, along with innumerable others, am the living proof of it. I am angry, but anger is also fuel. My hope is that, in its small way, this anger can turn the tide. So that I may one day live in a world where the very idea of circumcision strikes every human heart as it should: as a disgusting, barbaric, and ghastly violation of human rights that robs from non-consenting persons the choice of their bodily integrity and sexual futures.

I live in America. Laws against female circumcision were passed here in 1996, making the practice a felony. To date, there are no protections for newborn boys. Their sexual integrity and their natural sexual development are in complete control of the parents/guardians, who are often uninformed or misinformed by doctors and nurses who have been conditioned to believe the foreskin is just "extra skin," or by unscrupulous medical practitioners incentivized to harvest male foreskins for interferon research or for cosmetic corporations. These are documented practices. That my foreskin was potentially used so corporations could sell overpriced facials leaves me with a sense of aggrieved horror I cannot begin to fathom.

Today, in my early thirties, age has considerably diminished what sensitivity I had as a youth. I live in the fear that my sexual organ will become a senseless husk, a shadow of the shadow I was left with when I was first taken home. When my parents were told Vaseline would take care of the wound I should never have suffered, yet am forced to carry until my dying day. I'm considering foreskin regeneration, a process that takes years, is unpredictable in its effects, and can only come so close to returning a man's sexual organ to its originally intended sensitivity. Like so many men, I am forced to right a wrong that should never have been committed in the first place. But I am glad we have options. I cannot speak for all men, but I have felt their pain and their loss, because it is mine. We may not ever recover what was taken from us, but we can prevent future generations of young boys and men from the suffering that comes from the practice of male genital mutilation.

"This has always caused me physical and psychological discomfort. The procedure was unnecessary and has impacted my life significantly... I have never discussed this with anyone."

Hi 15 Square, I just saw the webpage 'we want to hear your story' on the 15 Square website. I did write to 15 Square in November and received some good advice from David. My story is below. Please feel free to use this in your campaign & good luck!

Thank you for all the great work you do.

I am male, in my 40's and have only recently discovered your organisation. My parents had me circumcised when I was 11. This has always caused me physical and psychological discomfort. The procedure was unnecessary and has impacted my life significantly.

My parents are Methodist - not a religion that practises circumcision. I have never discussed this with anyone.

Recently, my situation has bothered me even more. I wonder whether I should discuss this with my parents. They are in good health, but 'not young'. We are very close and they have done so much for me. I don't want to upset them or divide us.

I would love to meet the right woman and have a family of my own. My school friends and many of my work colleagues have done just that. They probably wonder why I haven't. The answer lies mainly in confidence, or lack of it, based on failed relationships at university and in early career.

In February of my final year at junior school - I had some discomfort passing urine on two successive days. My mum took me to the GP who prescribed some tablets (no idea what they were).

Here is a timeline of my experiences:

March - no issues.

April - no issues. I had my 11th birthday and went on a 1-week school trip with tablets.

May - no issues. My mum took me back to the GP but I'm not sure why.

June - no issues.

July - no issues. Then my parents told me I would have a small operation to remove a little bit of skin in the first week of the holidays. This would allow lots of time to recover before I started senior school. I would probably be in and out of hospital in a day, and this would mean that there would be no repeat of the discomfort I felt earlier in the year.

Week three in July. I was circumcised in the local hospital under general anaesthetic. It was horrible waking up to see the bandages, then subsequently discovering the damaged tissue, covered in dissolvable stitches. It was very painful. After I had passed urine, I was allowed home that evening. In the weeks that followed, I wore a makeshift guard or a cricket box, and never left the house. At first it was painful to walk, and the wound wept considerably all over the guard or box.

August - I attended outpatient's appointments with my mum at the hospital, and my treatment was concluded.

September - Although I was mutilated, I could walk normally, play sport and go to the toilet without any issues. I started at an all-boys senior school which was a double hit to my development - I would hardly see the girls from junior school until we were reunited at sixth

form five years later. I didn't go to football trials in case anyone saw me. I loved football but I knew I was different.

As the years progressed, I began to realise what had happened and the impact on relationships. At sixth form I found it very tough as I did in my first year at university. I found it hard to study, possibly because I wasn't socialising as I should because I was preoccupied by my appearance & functionality. Going out on the town - discovering pubs & clubs, dating, A-levels, sport and more combined to make life difficult. Eventually, I learned to muddle through or even pretend the issue didn't exist. I joined football teams, but never had a shower, even in the middle of January! And nothing's changed!

Towards the end of university I went out with a girl I really liked for about 3 months. One day she asked me why I was different, had I had an operation? was I Jewish? I fell silent. I just put up a brick wall and went into my cave. Two days later and 4 hours before the graduation ceremony, she finished with me. This was really hard on the day, and as a legacy over the following decades.

Well meaning work colleagues tell me to "just get a girlfriend!" Kids in the school where I work ask, "are you a daddy?" Parents who are my age and younger greet me at the classroom door. I go to friends' weddings as a lone guest. They must all wonder why I've no wife & kids of my own.

2018/2019:

I have not had a relationship for years. I've discovered Foregen (real hope but when?), 15 Square and Men Do Complain. I almost attended the 15 Square summertime event or 2019 AGM, but wasn't bold enough. Recently, I went to my current GP for another unrelated issue, and drew breath to mention my circumcision and any possible reconstruction. This was a different GP & practice to that of my childhood. Would he take me seriously? Sadly, no words came out & I left.

There is a lot of talk at work about mental health & sharing your problems, so I wonder whether it is time to communicate more openly, at least with those closest to me? But how, when? And what about the risks of embarrassment, or being seen as weird or upsetting my parents? Maybe I could start with my little sister? - she may be completely unaware of what happened, but we are close and she is a great listener.

Thank you.



"I attribute its effects to everything from ADD to depression & anxiety. It made me create a mental aversion to intimacy and to think of sex as something shameful or something that shouldn't be openly discussed. I never feel sexually satisfied."

1. Your age.

31

2. Your background and reason for circumcision, if known.

White, middle class, routine/medical

3. How old were you when you received your circumcision?

0

4. How do you feel circumcision has affected your life?

I feel like it has impacted me in so many ways. I felt like the minority, like I was missing something. It made me insecure. Learning about the procedure made me realise how painful and traumatic it is. This has given me broader insight into the psychological damage that it has done to me. I attribute its effects to everything from ADD to depression & anxiety. It made me create a mental aversion to intimacy and to think of sex as something shameful or something that shouldn't be openly discussed. I never feel sexually satisfied.

5. How has your circumcision affected your relationships with others, (e.g. partners, parents or religious/cultural community?)

It has made me resentful of the doctor and of those who advocate it or are ignorant of the effects. Women I have been with have expected me to be circumcised. It has affected my relationships romantically too (because of the combination of anti-depressants and a thorough circumcision) it is very hard for me to finish which women take as a reflection on them. They also become irritated that it takes me so long to orgasm.

"If they just wanted me to look like the rest of the family, then I am mentally troubled. I suspect that, even if I could access my medical records, I would not find the answer."

Hello

You offered the opportunity for me to share my experience. I found writing this very helpful, maybe others have the same experience, I would be interested to know. You are welcome to publish any part you wish. Is there a page where I can read the experience of other men?

I am currently 59 years old. I am unclear if the background was medical or family tradition, probably a bit of both i.e. as soon as a medical reason could be found it was used to have me circumcised. At the time I was the only boy in the family, father and grandfather were both circumcised.

The operation happened in 1965 or 1966 when I was either 4 or 5 years old. The reason I know this, many years later I recall my father telling a story about a new camera and showing a picture of me on the Aust Ferry slipway with a partially built Severn Bridge behind me. There is picture of Bob Dylan standing in the same place – No Direction Home. Apparently, I was not allowed food or drinks that morning, and he was trying to keep me occupied. It is funny how you remember certain words, years later he was showing the picture to his friend and said – ‘that was taken the day that he was circumcised’. Why did he feel the need to share that detail?

If there is a theme to my memories, it is the lack of dignity.

I don't have any memories of visits to a Doctor, although I do have a memory of a school medical check-up in the infant school. Me and two other boys were taken to one side, the other two were crying their eyes out but don't know why.

I recall the day at the hospital. A few days before I was taken to a shop and my mum bought a toy for me. It was a snorkel type fire engine. Something I had wanted for ages and took it with me. There was a waiting room full of boys and mums. I guess it would be logical for all the appointments to be at the same time, but it makes it less personal. A bit like farm animals being lined up to be branded.

A nurse came in, everyone had to get undressed and wait in a towel. No dignity. It is indeed funny how memories work. The nurse came around, asked your age, the older boys had to have an injection (we used to call it a needle in those days), I did not have to have it but it is ironic how I did not know that I was about to have the skin cut off the end of my willy, but was terrified of a needle in the arm.

My only other memory that day was of being put on a trolley, a black mask put over my face and told to blow into it hard. I must have had a terrified look on my face.

Memories after the operation were no less unpleasant.

They made a bed in the front room, a room that was only every used for parties and Christmas, grandmother and aunties used to visit to see how I was. I refused to wee for days, they would make me stand in front of a bucket in the middle of the living room, I kept refusing.

The only pain I can remember was having the bandages off. Another day at the hospital. Eventually I got put in a bath and the bandages were soaked until they could be cut off.

Childhood memories of being the odd one out in school were the most painful.

How do I feel about it?

The question that haunts me is “why”.

I would not mind if there was a genuine medical reason, even if there was a medical cure today using creams which was not available in 1960's I would be OK. But, if it was just in case there were any more problems, and rather than putting cream on and waiting they just cut it off, or if they just wanted me to look like the rest of the family, then I am mentally troubled. I suspect that, even if I could access my medical records, I would not find the answer.

How has it affected me?

I hated being the odd one out in school and then, when a little older, in gym showers etc. I have got used to it in the last 10 years but still would not want to get undressed with a group of people I know. I am also very self-conscious when standing at urinals.

Also, I used to be conscious of it in front of girlfriends, and I would make every effort to avoid them seeing me soft. Most girlfriends did not care, many did not know much about it although one girlfriend clearly did not like it.

As a parent, my son kept getting infections, he went to the doctor many times and kept coming back with creams. The doctor told us he might need “a small operation”. It was not a pleasant task putting the cream on him, but I did it diligently to avoid the need for the operation. Maybe if I had the same cream my story would be different.

“No-one gave us any information about the physical and psychological trauma that it would cause our boys... I remember the day of their circumcision like it was yesterday. Deep down I didn't want to do it, but there was an invisible pressure willing me on.”

Male Circumcision – A Parent's Perspective

Way back in the summer of 2008, my eldest son (then 6 ½) had been complaining for some time about his 'willy' hurting him and feeling tight when he went for a wee. We took him to our GP who advised circumcision as the best treatment. We said that we may have considered this in the future as we are Muslims. We then asked if our other son (then 2 ½) might suffer from the same issue? If so, they could be circumcised together. The GP said that circumcisions were only performed for medical, not cultural or religious, reasons. She referred both boys to the hospital. At no time did she suggest an alternative treatment and we (in our ignorance) did not ask.

When the boys were examined at the hospital, they were both diagnosed with Phimosis and we received an appointment for the circumcision procedure for the end of October 2008 (3 months after our initial appointment with the GP). I just wish that we had asked more questions, researched the alternatives and not been so willing to go along with what the specialists said. The only risks we were ever advised of was surrounding the anaesthetic and bleeding after the operation. No-one gave us any information about the physical and psychological trauma that it would cause our boys. No-one told us that it was unnecessary and it would affect their sexual pleasure and destroy millions of nerves in the most sensitive organ of the body. No-one even suggested that we leave it a while and have a think about it. They thought they were doing us a favour as muslims - that it was a mutual agreement! We didn't even realise until 6 months ago that Phimosis is natural and that the foreskin separates from the head of the penis usually during puberty (between 12 and 18 years of age). How could we have been so ignorant and blind?

I remember the day of their circumcision like it was yesterday. Deep down I didn't want to do it, but there was an invisible pressure willing me on. It was the normal practice for boys in my husband's country. No-one ever questions it there. We had the added belief that our eldest had a medical need for it and that our other son could also develop the same problem. We naively thought that they could support each other through it.

The boys were in a room on their own. When they came round from the anaesthetic they seemed ok at first, just a bit sleepy. I was more worried about them not waking up from the anaesthetic than the life-changing harm that the circumcision had caused. How ridiculous was that? When the pain relief started to wear off, I realised just how much pain they were in. They couldn't bear to wear pants or allow anything to rub against their penis. My eldest's penis actually got infected afterwards too. They couldn't bear to wear clothes over their genitals and having a bath was a nightmare!

However, slowly the scars healed and I thought the worst was over. I thought they could carry on with life as normal now. I couldn't have been more wrong! In the summer of 2019, my youngest son said that he wanted to speak to us about something. He said that he had been angry for a while about being circumcised. It was completely out of the blue for us. He said that when he had looked at FGM in PSHE at school, he started to question why female circumcision was illegal, but male circumcision was legal and acceptable. At first, we said that he was exaggerating and that his dad had been circumcised and that it hadn't affected him at all! It took months of angry exchanges with both sons, lots of research and viewing documentaries like 'A Cut Too Far? Male Circumcision' by the BBC and 'American Circumcision' to begin to realise the full impact of our decision in 2008. We searched for support groups to help us to deal with the issues in our family. It was tearing us apart! We found 15 Square and I started e-mailing David Smith. We had a video call with him (as we couldn't meet him due to Coronavirus) and this really helped the boys. We became members of 15 Square and vowed to share our story in the hope that people are better informed about circumcision and its devastating effects.

Lucky for my boys (now aged 14 & 18), they are in the process of restoring their foreskin and are slowly beginning to find a glimmer of hope; amongst the extreme trauma they have suffered. We have requested their hospital records and now intend to make a complaint at the highest level for the misinformation and deception exhibited by the specialists responsible for the male genital mutilation of our boys. I cannot turn back the clock by 12 years for them, but I can seek justice on their behalf and change the future for other victims like them.

"I hate it and it's affected my sex life. I am envious of partners sometimes and I hate my parents for letting it happen, as well as the surgeon that did it. I wish it had never happened."

I am 27 years old, and I was circumcised at 18 months old for phimosis.

I hate it and it's affected my sex life. I am envious of partners sometimes and I hate my parents for letting it happen, as well as the surgeon that did it. I wish it had never happened.

"When it dawned on me after about a week or two of what I had had done I went into deep shock. I could not possibly see a way forward for myself. I was suicidal. At this point I needed help which is a difficult thing to find on this matter. I was in absolute distress the sort I had never encountered. I was left with diminished sensitivity and was unable to facilitate an orgasm through masturbation for 11 months."

I was circumcised at age 46 in 2018. I am not religious and I had a medical circumcision. I had had a Frenuloplasty in my thirties which had helped but was not definitive in solving my phimosis. I was always very apprehensive toward circumcision surgery and not without good reason as I am now most painfully aware. I had a circumcision booked with the NHS in the year leading up to my private operation but backed out of the operation post consultation due to nerves and hopefully having more control over things at a private clinic. I had what was described as a partial circumcision. Partial sounds good in that less skin may be taken at time of surgery but the end result for me unfortunately was like having a part of your sexuality removed which triggered a strong psychological reaction in my case.

When it dawned on me after about a week or two of what I had had done I went into deep shock. I could not possibly see a way forward for myself. I was suicidal. At this point I needed help which is a difficult thing to find on this matter. I was in absolute distress the sort I had never encountered. I was left with diminished sensitivity and was unable to facilitate an orgasm through masturbation for 11 months.

As for personal relations my confidence has been decimated. On raising these issues with the surgeons/clinic their response implied I was suffering from pre-existing mental issues. The foreskin is highly erogenous tissue packed with nerve endings which if removed can cause serious loss of sensitivity which can take years to adapt to personally. I definitely made a huge personal error preceding with the operation. Yes, there are warnings in paperwork and pre op consent forms relating to sensitivity loss and altered states but what I strongly feel is they are not adequate and that the preputioplasty operation should be tried first at all times before circumcision.

If the NHS and other organisations knew the full extent of suffering some men experience from this operation and took note they would not prescribe circumcision unless 100% necessary and perform a preputioplasty operation as a default procedure. The preputioplasty operation was not available on the NHS in my area at the time and I feel strongly that this is a main factor in my personal timeline that could have avoided my current situation. I had two consultations, an NHS and private one. What I should have been told by both NHS and private consultants is that I should approach circumcision with great caution. It has caused me great reduction in sexual sensitivity, severe body dysmorphia, extreme psychological distress which I can not necessarily see an end to. I turned to family members and close friends for help. Nothing could reassure my personal state, in fact nothing is really the same as before, circumcision has been very personally damaging.

The official documentation/information to inform men of all the complications or negative effects resulting from this procedure are woefully inadequate. As far as I am concerned circumcision is a wrongful procedure that leaves a man in a wholly unnatural state.

Recovery.

My GP worked with me fairly well, but I was never truly understood. At first I was prescribed diazepam as my distress was extreme. Later antidepressants. The NHS mental health system took 1 year to administer mental health care which was a basic firefighting response 12 months after I really needed it. The only people who have any idea how badly damaged you are, are other men who have been circumcised. So with that very true fact in mind, how can an urologist/surgeon possibly advise you of any possible negative side effects? They can't! 99.9% of them either have a foreskin or have had it removed in infancy. The experience of adult circumcision has been terrible. I am sure that a dangerous proportion of men circumcised as adults are badly affected by this procedure. I am now off the antidepressants but feel now that I am still in need of medication due to uncontrollable depressive events and mood swings. I'm not saying I was a model for mental health wellbeing before the op, but now I have quite serious problems indeed. I am slowly recovering with the help of

foreskin restoration and hope to be fully restored by the time 3 years have passed post operation.

Restoration.

By the time 6 weeks had passed after my op. I had discovered foreskin restoration movements in the US.<http://www.restoringforeskin.org/> user uberestoroo. At the time of writing this I have gained 15mm of inner foreskin and am growing more tissue at about 1 - 2mm per month. The movement In America, fuelled as some may know bizarrely by the mutilation of about 50% of their boys at birth. I am a dedicated foreskin restorer. It is the only thing that gives me any hope to improve my situation, and I can thankfully say that it does improve things over time and makes you feel much more in control and on the road to being whole again. I recommend it for all circumcised men who are not happy with their situations. So, with what I now know about tissue expansion from foreskin restoration, I, in hindsight, could have rectified my phimosis without surgical intervention by making a homemade mechanical device to hold the foreskin open with adjustable tension. This could be worn daily over many months and would have solved my problem. In the past I tried 2 foreskin stretching devices called novoglan and phimocure. Neither are fit for purpose and have flawed design. The NHS prescribe creams and stretching methods to help cure phimosis but the direction and instruction on how to do this and how long this will take are inadequate. My experience has of course made me very aware of infantile circumcision, who performs it and why ie. which countries, religious bodies etc. I cannot fathom why it is tolerated in modern society. It is without doubt genital mutilation.

Thank you for reading my story.

"The doctor immediately grabbed my penis and pushed the skin back. It *hurt* and I nearly jumped off the table. ...He grabbed my glans, which was extremely sensitive, and I immediately got an erection. I was shaking - scared, horrified and humiliated. Instead of my father or the pediatrician saying anything to me about how my erection was normal, etc. the two of them just stood there and LAUGHED. NOTHING was said to me."

Hi, attached is a long history, but I am in a very unusual situation, so I consider it all necessary. It is brutally honest.

1. Your age.

2. Your background and reason for circumcision, if known.

American of Lutheran background (now, a devout Atheist!!!) with a routine infant circumcision.

3. How old were you when you received your circumcision?

Newborn (it was a partial/botched circumcision that gave the appearance of an intact foreskin at a glance)

4. How do you feel circumcision has affected your life?

Absolute disaster.

5. How has your circumcision affected your relationships with others, (e.g. partners, parents or religious/cultural community?)

It utterly destroyed my relationship with my father and damaged my relationship with my mother. I stopped believing in a god when I was about 12 or 13, but that wasn't over the circumcision issue. However, my current disdain for ALL religion is because of the Abrahamic religions and their various sexual teachings -- including genital cutting of children.

6. As many other details and thoughts that you wish to share.

In order to make sense of my feelings on the issue of circumcision, I wrote this history which helps me to understand how my thoughts developed.

I was born in 1952 (the proximity to Thanksgiving may be very relevant to what happened to me).

3/4/5/6 years old:

My earliest clear memories (3-4 years old) is the recollection of sneaking around the locker room every chance I could to try to see as many penises as possible. I was always very pleased when I saw someone with foreskin, but it was ALWAYS on an "old man", NEVER on another kid. My logic told me that for some reason, I also had an old man's penis. I knew I was a kid and wanted to look like the other kids (including my two older brothers). My father was intact (I only saw him a few times in my life), but I NEVER wanted to look like him. Eventually, (5-6 years old), I realized that some "old men" were circumcised, and some were not. Some very old men were circumcised, but some middle-aged men were intact. I was then more confused about the different types of penises, but figured that eventually all old men would look intact - the process just took more time with some people than with others. I can't say that I recall thinking that there was something drastically wrong with me, but simply that I had an old man's penis (though, without pubic hair, etc.).

Side note: Having watched my nieces and nephews trying to sneak around when they were little (there is nothing subtle about it), I now understand why people sometimes seemed to give me strange looks and cover themselves as I was trying so hard to "innocently" look at their genitals. Clearly, I knew even then that looking at someone's penis was wrong, and

that the topic of penises was something that was taboo and could not be talked about – with anyone. I have no memory of ever asking my parents why I was different when I was a young child so I cannot say how I first realized that sexual issues were so “unmentionable”.

6/7 years old:

This is the “defining moment” of my life and is therefore the most difficult for me to write about. My father (a physician) took my next older brother and me to a pediatrician for school physical exams. Normally my father took care of whatever medical problems we might have. We sat in the examination room wearing only our underpants. My brother was examined first and I watched as the pediatrician pulled down his underpants and *very* briefly examined his genitals. My exam was quite different. The doctor immediately grabbed my penis and pushed the skin back. It *hurt* and I nearly jumped off the table. I had never seen my glans before – I can’t even say that I knew that intact men had a glans. He grabbed my glans, which was extremely sensitive, and I immediately got an erection. I was shaking - scared, horrified, humiliated. Instead of my father or the pediatrician saying anything to me about how my erection was normal, etc. the two of them just stood there and LAUGHED. NOTHING was said to me. The pediatrician masturbated me for a while (moving my skin up and down repeatedly). I cannot adequately describe how absolutely mortified and petrified I felt. It is inconceivable to me that both the doctor and my father could not have noticed my distress. It was not an enjoyable sexual experience. Eventually the pediatrician asked my father a question that I did not understand. My father’s response was “Yes, but the doctor didn’t do a very good job of it.” Today, I am sure that the pediatrician was asking if I had been circumcised.

This was the first time that I realized that I didn’t simply have an old man’s penis, but that something was wrong with me. I did not know what and because nothing was said to me at the time or later, I eventually tried to convince myself that I just did not understand the whole exam. However, well into my adulthood, I continually agonized, back and forth, between whether or not I was intact or defective as the result of some doctor’s actions. I suspect that I just would not allow myself to accept the notion that there was something really wrong with me.

My father was serving in the Army when I was born and he did not see me until I was 4 months old. I never remember having a good relationship with my father, though I do remember desperately wanting my father to pay attention to me. After this experience I never really wanted to be around him (which was quite easy to do since he was a workaholic and seldom at home). I learned from this experience that my father would simply stand by and let someone hurt me – and laugh about it, too! It was a complete betrayal of all the trust I had in him. It made me think that he did not love me and that the reason he never played with me (I remember him playing card games with my siblings) was that I was defective.

If I wasn’t obsessed about penises/foreskin before, I certainly was now and have been obsessed ever since. What I do know now is that while there was no intent to sexually abuse me, that examination was sexual abuse in effect. More on this in a later section.

8 years old:

Shortly before my 8th birthday, we moved to Taiwan for almost a year. In 1960/61 it was common for little children to use the gutters as a toilet, so I saw many little Chinese boys' penises. I was quite pleased to see that ALL these kids looked like me. Despite the fact that I am of northern European descent, my logic told me that since my parents could speak a little Chinese and I had a Chinese penis, then obviously I was a "little bit Chinese"!

OK, maybe I was not a very bright 8 year-old. However, the point is that much of my identity was defined by the appearance of my penis. For a while I did not feel as "defective" as before.

8- 14+ years old:

I eagerly awaited the arrival of TIME magazine and the occasional National Geographic magazine. The Art section of TIME sometimes had a picture of a painting or statue with a naked male. I always wanted to see if the guy had a foreskin. Often the picture in the magazine was too small to really be able to determine the status, but I was intent on trying to figure it out. National Geographic, on the other hand, was sometimes a bonanza of pictures with naked men. However, these magazines probably did a lot to help reinforce the idea that primitive people, long dead Romans and Greeks, and cherubs had foreskins. Medical books (mostly of my father's) and health/medical books I searched out in the school libraries mostly showed pictures or sketches of circumcised penises. If anything was mentioned about foreskin, it was to say something negative. Many books seemed to give the impression that the foreskin did not even exist! The message was loud and clear: foreskin is useless, dirty, unhealthy, and disgusting. It was a FACT!

10-11 years old:

A Jewish boy in my class came up to me in the locker room and very proudly showed me his penis. I had seen him before and had thought that he was circumcised. He wanted to tell me that he was now "in the boy's club". During a recent vacation (2 weeks earlier) he had been circumcised, AGAIN! Apparently, he (and/or his parents??) thought that not enough skin had been taken during the first circumcision. This was quite a surprise to me. He explained that the doctor had cut off the rest of his "extra" skin and now he was really a "boy". This was the first time that I realized that the difference in penises was the result of cutting off the foreskin.

Obviously, this Jewish boy must have been quite concerned about his appearance also. He had specifically sought me out to show off his "normal" penis. He thought I should "join the club". His penis looked very scarred and ugly to me. I was horrified. As much as I wanted to look circumcised, I was not about to let anyone cut me up! However, for the first time, my fear was verbalized to me: I was not *really* a boy!*

*More on this in a later section.

11-12 years old:

The school swim classes for boys were conducted in the nude. Of about 40 boys in the class, I was the only one with foreskin when I was 11. I can honestly say that no one ever made any verbal comments to me about my foreskin, though I was well aware that others were looking at me (I was looking at them, also). It was particularly embarrassing to be unanimously elected the “best back floater” in the class even though it was true. There I was, floating on my back with the entire class looking at me.

When I was 12, there was a boy from India in the class who was intact. (I should note that by this age, I did NOT think that I was a “little bit Indian”). While I was pleased not to be the only boy in the swim class with a foreskin, I was very aware that I was not like any of the other American kids - mostly white, some black, a few Asian.

Around this time (12/13 years old), my father gave me a school physical. The exam was done in my parents’ bedroom and I was petrified. I associated a physical exam with someone playing with my penis. I was still quite ignorant about sex (neither of my parents ever told me the facts of life), but I “knew” by now that getting an erection was definitely a mortal sin. I don’t think my father had seen me naked for several years and he seemed surprised when I pulled down my underpants for him. As he examined my penis, he began to seem upset. He manipulated my foreskin back and forth, (fortunately for me, I was so petrified that I did not get an erection this time), but he was clearly acting as though something was really wrong with me. He did not say a word to me and I “knew” that no comments/questions were expected from me. My mother suddenly came into the room and my father angrily asked her why she hadn’t told him about my penis. My mother’s response was that I had been old enough to wash and dress myself for years and she wasn’t aware that anything was wrong. A big argument began between my parents and I was immediately sent from the room. I was quite relieved as I was old enough to be very embarrassed to be naked in front of my mother, especially while my penis was being talked about. That was the end of the exam and NOTHING was ever said to me about it.

As with the previous exam, I don’t believe that my father intended any sexual abuse. However, the effect was sexual abuse. Who could I tell? It was my own father this time “playing” with my penis and not just a bystander. I knew that I just had to stand there and let him do anything to me without the slightest explanation. To make matters worse, it was clear that he was upset about my genitals. Something was *definitely* “wrong” with my penis AND apparently my testicles now, also!

By this time, my relationship with my father was almost non-existent anyway, but this just reinforced to me that my father was not my protector. I felt he ignored me because I was defective, and it was simply not acceptable for one of his children to be less than the best.

13 years old:

My parents were very religious. They had originally planned to be medical missionaries in China (which is why they could speak Chinese, though not very well at all by this time). I was required to go to catechism classes although I really did not believe in a god. While reviewing some passages from Genesis with my mother, we read about the circumcision

covenant. The bible seemed to make it clear that little boys were to be circumcised and I finally asked my mom why I had not been circumcised.

Her response was: "You *are* circumcised, but you were circumcised *differently* than your brothers."

I was dumbfounded. I was so shocked that I did not say anything more. My reaction was that she was WRONG. Clearly, I was *not* circumcised. The evidence was obvious since my glans was *completely* covered by "foreskin". After believing my whole life that I was intact, and now being told that I was circumcised contrary to the evidence, made no sense. I believed my mother was "stupid". It was *impossible* for me to be circumcised. My mom, being a girl, simply did not know anything about penises!

I don't know if my mom told my father that I had thought that I was not circumcised. He never talked to me and I never attempted to talk to either of them about the subject again.

15-16 years old:

During the last year in high school, I began to notice that a couple of the other boys seemed to have some skin bunched up behind their glans. Most guys had a very tight circumcision. One day after swimming (thankfully with swimsuits the last few years) I saw that while one of these guys was drying off, his foreskin moved forward to cover most of his glans. He obviously sensed it and immediately pulled his skin back again. He looked around to make sure that nobody had noticed. I believe he realized that I had seen, but we never talked about it although we were sort of friends. I knew that he had been born in South America when his parents had worked there for a number of years. This gave me the idea that I too could probably try to pass as circumcised. However, pulling my foreskin back would give me an erection. That was clearly *not* an option for the locker room and, anyway, *everyone* had already seen my foreskin.

16 years old:

I do *not* go to doctors. My sister is a physician and if I need medical care, I call her. I know that she is not going to ask me to drop my pants and then play with my penis. When my sister takes my blood pressure and pulse, I am fine. The few times that I have been forced to see a doctor for a school physical or employment physical have been very traumatic. I panic. My blood pressure goes through the roof (my sister refers to it as "white coat hypertension"). My pulse races. I hardly sleep for days before the exam. I am almost frozen with fear.

I needed a physical to enter college. The form was sent to me along with other college information. I read the physical exam form and it asked for various information about my genitals. It was clear that the doctor was going to handle my penis. At 16 it does not take much to get an erection. All the horror of the previous two physical exams came back to me. I "knew" that the doctor was going to see my defective penis and that when he touched it, I would get an erection and literally die of shame. As my father had recently died, my mom called a family friend who had worked with my father. He came to my home to do the physical so that we would not have to pay for a clinic visit. It was obvious to this doctor that

I was very uncomfortable even before he began. I could see how far into the form he was getting and became more and more terrified as he came closer to the section about my genitals.

I do not know why he skipped the genital exam. I believe he realized that I was very nervous, but I'm sure he didn't know how panicked I really was! He marked the form "Okay, Normal" and said that we could skip the genital exam because "It *must* be okay, or your *father* would have taken care of it before".

On the one hand, I felt as though I could breathe again and I know he noticed my relief. However, I was also too ashamed to tell him that my genitals were defective and that my father knew it and did nothing about it!

In retrospect, I wish that he had examined my genitals and had the sense to send me to someone who could explain my anatomy to me. It could have saved me 30 years of worry and frustration.

16-25 years old:

The summer before going away to college was spent "training" my foreskin to stay bunched up behind my glans so that I would fit in with the other kids in college. I was only 16 ½ and knew I would be different enough from the other freshmen just because of my age. I figured that no one would know me and I could get a fresh start in life. "Training" my foreskin to stay back was not easy. My foreskin would move forward at the most inopportune times and catch pubic hairs under my foreskin. It was quite painful sometimes to have my pubic hairs sometimes pulled out by their roots. Trying to get someplace where I could reach my hand inside my underwear and pull the skin back to release the pubic hairs sometimes took quite a while. However, by the end of summer, despite how uncomfortable it was to have my glans constantly exposed at first, I was ready to be "normal".

No one in college ever saw my foreskin covering my glans. However, for the first time I saw a few other American guys in my age bracket who were intact and did NOT try to hide it in the showers. Intact guys were still definitely a small minority. One of my two best friends from college is intact. The other friend once made a nasty joke to him about not being a "real man" because he was not circumcised. My intact friend defended himself very well, but I just stood there without the courage to add anything in his defence. I could not bring myself to admit that I had foreskin. --- (I talked to this friend in 2001 and finally told him the truth about myself and apologized for my earlier silence).

After college, I was less concerned about keeping my skin back all the time. However, I was still determined to appear circumcised in front of others. It was certainly more comfortable to have my glans covered while wearing clothes.

20/24 years old:

I don't *know* whether sexual orientation is a matter of nature, nurture, or both. I *believe* it is nature. Nurture (social environment) seems to play the main role in how openly that sexual orientation is expressed.

I believe I would be gay no matter what my penis looked like. HOWEVER, I certainly have been obsessed with foreskin my entire life. I have never been attracted to women. Considering my parents' religious beliefs and the few comments that I ever heard about homosexuals, I "knew" that if there was anything more dirty and disgusting than foreskin, it was homosexuals. There were a couple of adult movie theatres in Chicago and I went to see some adult movies. I wanted to know what sex was all about and what women looked like. The only things in the movies that had any interest for me were the penises. In the 1970's, American porn makers employed circumcised men almost exclusively. If there was an intact man, his penis would only be shown with the foreskin forward for the briefest of moments – almost as if the editor had mistakenly missed editing it out entirely. Adult movies reinforced the idea that men should not have a foreskin. There was no way I could even seriously contemplate ever having sex with another person. Although I could only fantasize about other "intact" men, it was clear that no one could consider me desirable.

25 years old:

I remembered that the one thing I had ever heard my father say about dating was that he didn't think people should date until they were 25 years old! (I have no idea if he was serious when he made that statement.) I was determined that I would not allow my (dead) father the satisfaction of my being a 25-year-old virgin. A couple months before my 25th birthday, I began going to a gay movie theater occasionally. I saw that some of the people at the gay movie theater were sitting together and obviously playing with each other. After a few visits to the theater, I allowed another man to sit by me. I hoped that he was intact. Unfortunately, he was not. His penis was a big disappointment. It may as well have just been a stick. It had no moving parts, which made trying to give him a hand job rather awkward.

After a few more visits to the theater an intact man came to sit next to me. At first, I was disappointed because I thought he was circumcised. He had assumed that I would be offended by a foreskin. He pulled his skin back, and held it back, before letting me see it. I can't blame him for trying to hide his foreskin. I had done the same thing myself before letting him see my penis!

However, his penis was *wonderful*! It was much more than just a "stick". I went with him to a gay bathhouse and had an incredible time. He was not offended by my foreskin and knew what to do with it to really give me a fantastic experience.

As wonderful as his penis was, I was quite surprised by it. He had much more foreskin than I have. Everything I had ever read about intact penises was quite specific about how the foreskin *always* retracted behind the glans when the penis is erect. While his foreskin could be pulled back to completely uncover his glans, his foreskin could also completely cover his erection with overhang! When I had an erection, my foreskin could only be pushed up to cover about 2/3 of my glans. It also required a great deal more effort (pressure) to move my foreskin than was required with his penis.

Though it was not explicitly stated in all the medical/health books that I had ever seen, the statement that the erect penis ALWAYS had a completely exposed glans gave the implication was that a foreskin had no use during sex. The erect intact penis was essentially

described as equivalent in both appearance and function to a circumcised penis. I was beginning to doubt all the information I had read about intact penises, especially about how horrible they were. Over the next few years, I discovered that most of the information about foreskin in books was inaccurate. Today, I don't even consider a circumcised penis to be a "real" penis unless it is restored.

25-46 years old:

I realized that I seemed to have a short foreskin which did not move as easily as other intact men's foreskins. I began to suspect that the abrupt change in color on my foreskin when I retracted it might actually be a scar. Other intact men had a color change where the inner and outer foreskin seemed to meet, but it did not seem to be quite such a sharp line. It was clear that some intact men have lots of foreskin and some do not. Some have a loose foreskin, some a tight foreskin. Although I had previously felt that my penis was intact, it didn't seem to work quite as well as other men's intact penises.

I began to wonder about my mother's statement that I had been "circumcised DIFFERENTLY than my brothers". I LOOK as though I am intact. No sexual partner has ever told me that I had a long foreskin for a circumcised man. I have been told that I have a short foreskin. From what I assumed about how circumcisions were performed, the only explanation that could even begin to make sense was that the doctor had performed what I now know as the equivalent of "brit milah". If I was circumcised at all, they must have taken off *only* the very *tip* of my foreskin.

Eventually I was almost convinced that I had been circumcised. I thought that most of my frenulum was missing as it is certainly much less prominent than some I have seen.

*I was still wrong about what happened to me. See later section.

In my mid 30's I saw Bud Berkeley's book, "Foreskin", and a few years later, Jim Bigelow's "The Joy of Uncircumcising"! Along with the FQ and UNCUT magazines, I realized that many other people are fascinated by the foreskin and angry about being circumcised. I didn't feel so totally alone, but I still had no one I could talk to. I made some very brief attempts to "restore" my foreskin, but the tape method seemed too inconvenient considering that I already had as much "foreskin" as these men were trying to attain for themselves. I was about 33 years old before I saw anything positive written about foreskin.

46-48 years old:

I finally found the courage to attend a NORM meeting in Chicago in February, 1999. The attendees did not seem crazy and did not seem to think I was crazy. NOCIRC was planning a conference in Chicago to coincide with a new policy statement from the AAP in April, 1999. In a space of just 2 months, I went from being totally silent on the issue of circumcision to being an open intactivist. I am eternally grateful to all the people I have met through NORM and NOCIRC for making me feel like a human being.

I have tried to get my medical records concerning my circumcision, but the state of Maryland has a 29-year statute of limitations and the county hospital where I was born

decided that it was too expensive to store (or microfilm/fiche) old medical records. The only record they have of me is that I was born there and was discharged. I have spoken to the doctor who delivered me (my aunt remembers the doctor). I contacted him to ask about my circumcision. He acknowledged that intercourse is better with a foreskin, but said that back in the 1950's they did circumcisions if the parents requested it. He doesn't remember me in particular (not surprising, he must be > 75) but says that without the medical records he really could not tell me anything. He did say that he worked with at least 3 other doctors, and I could have been circumcised by any of the doctors in the group who had the time before my discharge. I told him my situation and asked him if he had realized that foreskins were useful and thus had performed minimal circumcisions. However, he thought it most unlikely that he would have done a circumcision back then which retained any foreskin.

He seemed sincere in my conversation with him and in his follow-up letter. He is lucky that I cannot blame him specifically for actually performing my circumcision. If I knew for sure who did it, I would feel quite justified in doing him/her serious harm. I doubt that I would actually do anything to the doctor, and it is very difficult to admit that I would like to harm someone, but it would be dishonest of me not to say this.

See later section for additional thoughts.

48 years old - the truth finally revealed:

As I said before, I do *not* go to doctors. However, since the guys in my NORM group could not say for sure what had happened to me, I decided to seek out a doctor who might be able to tell me the truth but not think I was crazy or ridicule me. I have heard too many accounts of doctors who think men who want a foreskin back must be crazy. Marilyn Milos suggested Dr. James Snyder and he agreed to look at me at the Sydney conference. Eventually, 3 doctors looked at me during the conference. I was a surprise to each of them. Although they had each heard me say that I have always looked as though I am intact, all were quite surprised when they first saw my penis. All 3 doctors said that they have never seen an adult, unrestored man who looks as intact as I do. One doctor even said "you're not circumcised" until he took a closer look. Here is their assessment:

I was circumcised with a Gomco clamp. Probably as much skin was removed from me as from a "usual" Gomco clamp circumcision. However, the doctor was incompetent and managed to pull up the skin from closer to the middle of my penis into the clamp before cutting. I have about ¼ of my ridged band, though none of it goes completely around my penis. I also have my entire frenulum. None of the doctors had ever seen a circumcised penis with as much of the ridged band left as I do.

Everyone has a "pubic fat pad". I have a very thick pubic fat pad. I have been fat most of my life, but even at those times that I have been "skinny", I have a very significant pubic fat pad. This means that in order for my penis to be visible, it must be long enough to extend past the pubic fat pad. The skin that was left on my penis cannot retract into the body as the glans can, so it folds forward in front of my glans. When the penile skin covers the glans, it is

referred to as “hidden”, “concealed”, or “buried” penis in the medical literature. When I am totally flaccid, my penis practically disappears into my pubic fat pad. There is enough dartos muscle for my “foreskin” to contract around and close up in front of my glans. In addition, there is a large skin tag on the raphe which is located just at the tip of my “foreskin”. When flaccid this gives an appearance similar to the “lip of the preputial orifice”.

In other words, I really do look as though I am intact. There is enough natural variety in the size and shape of intact genitals, that my APPEARANCE is what I now call “NORMAL” as opposed to the usual circumcised penis which looks “ABNORMAL”.

However, appearance is not the same as sensitivity and functionality. While I do have my entire frenulum, (though it is not as prominent as some frenulums I have seen - which is why I used to think that some of my frenulum had been cut off as is common in circumcision), I believe that I have essentially NO feeling in that area. It is definitely not the highly erogenous tissue that many others have. On the other hand, the movement of my “foreskin” (I believe the ridged band specifically) up and down across my corona is most pleasurable to me. It makes me EXTREMELY ANGRY that the other 3/4 of my ridged band is gone.

I was born on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. As it was common to wait about a week before circumcising in 1952, it is quite possible that some junior, inexperienced doctor performed my circumcision while the senior staff was on holiday or busy doing “important” tasks. The 3 doctors in Sydney all say that whoever did my circumcision was “incompetent”, but probably “incompetent in my favor”. Their opinion is that my physical damage is much less than most circumcised men. That may well be true. However, if you have read this far, I am sure you would agree that I have had very significant psychological damage.

Marilyn Milos asked why I want to restore when I already seem to have a foreskin. Well, my skin does not move as smoothly and easily as intact men’s foreskin. When I am erect, the skin will not move without a lot of effort. When trying to move the “foreskin” over my glans, I am pulling the skin from my abdomen onto the base of my penis. It looks as though I am raising a tent on a pole. Partners do not feel comfortable using as much force as is necessary to move my ridged band over my corona. If there was more “foreskin”, I believe the gliding motion would be much better. I am currently holding off on restoration in order to participate in a penile sensitivity study out in California. The researchers think it might be interesting to see what sensitivity I have before any significant restoration is attempted.

49/50 years old:

At the 2002 April NOCIRC conference in Washington, DC, I volunteered to have the penile sensitivity test demonstrated on me. I was anxious to start some serious restoration efforts and although the formal study had not started, we would at least have an idea of where I stand compared to other circumcised men.

The testing was not done under ideal conditions (i.e., more than 8 people in the room, people talking causing distractions, etc.). Several minutes were spent trying to decide whether they should use the intact or circumcised form for my test. They eventually decided

to use the intact form since I have my entire frenulum, frenular delta, and a substantial part of my ridged band. The results were pretty much what they expected EXCEPT that my frenular delta was remarkably LESS sensitive than those of even most circumcised men!! This is very upsetting to me.

I assume that the nerve pathways to that area of my penis have been cut, crushed, or whatever. In other words, what Dr. McGrath believes is the most sensitive part of the penis is not functioning as such for me. The nerve pathways have been damaged and/or destroyed. Obviously, even if you preserve the nerve endings, you still have to have the nerve pathways for those nerve endings to be of much use. I now believe that it may be the nerve endings in my corona that are being stimulated by my foreskin which provide sexual pleasure instead of the nerve endings in the remainder of my ridged band.

Serious “fauxskin” restoration is now underway. I am using a tapeless tugging device (called a “pul-man”) invented by a NORM-UK member in England. After just a few weeks of tugging, the ease of foreskin movement while erect was dramatically improved and seems to get better and better. I can’t say that I notice extra foreskin length yet while flaccid (except immediately after removing the tugging device), but I can cover more of my glans while erect.

I am quite delighted in the improvement in gliding movement which helps me mentally cope with the knowledge of how insensitive my penis actually is.

Thoughts on my own circumcision:

RAGE, HATE, BETRAYAL, SEXUAL ASSAULT, MUTILATION.

On an INTELLECTUAL level, I can understand that child circumcision is a complicated issue buried in both ancient and modern mythology. There is no one particular person I can blame for my circumcision. We are the products of our past. I know that I can be just as oblivious to injustices that I don’t feel affect me directly.

However, on an EMOTIONAL level, I can place LOTS of blame:

The ARROGANCE of our societies and in particular, the medical communities which continue to circumcise children, fills me with rage. Human rights apparently mean nothing unless they coincide with one’s cultural, traditional, or religious beliefs. Human rights, by definition, are supposed to override other considerations.

I hope that there has been a *major* improvement in training for pediatricians since I was 6 years old. Children need to be treated as if they are a human being with thoughts and feelings instead of being a slab of meat, much like a cadaver for whom no personal consideration is necessarily required. I am quite sure that my sister (a pediatrician) does not treat children the way I was when I was 6 and again when I was 10-11. What the medical profession still does not comprehend is that a new-born is not just a slab of meat. The only real difference that I can see between my childhood physical exams and my circumcision is that as a baby I was not too intimidated to keep quiet about what was happening to me. I’m sure that I screamed bloody murder as an infant - not that anybody paid attention anyway!

I applaud those few medical professionals who speak out against circumcision in the media and through NOCIRC, NORM, Doctors Opposing Circumcision (D.O.C), and other Genital Integrity Organizations (male/female/intersex). The silence of doctors who don't agree with child circumcision but cannot bring themselves to criticize the practice in public, much less within the medical community, is appalling to me. The reason I do not go to doctors today is not that I am still embarrassed about having foreskin or afraid I will get an erection, but that I cannot trust someone in a profession that, as a whole, will not stop mutilating children. As D.O.C points out, child circumcision violates all 7 principles of the American Medical Association and the official policy on informed consent of the American Academy of Pediatrics – "*My Body Belongs to Me*"! If the medical community has no respect for my foreskin, why should I trust them to respect any other part of my body?

How am I supposed to find a doctor that I can trust? There is still a collective refusal on the part of the American medical community to even contemplate the possibility that a foreskin might have any use at all!

Even some of the staff at the gay health clinic in Chicago are ignorant of the anatomy and function of the foreskin. During a routine STD checkup, a young staff member saw my "Where is my foreskin?" T-shirt along with my "Genital Mutilation of Children Violates Human Rights" button. He asked, incredulously, why I was against circumcision. I replied that there is no medical justification for it and that foreskins had many sexual functions. He immediately went into a tirade about how foreskin *causes* penile cancer! When I tried to explain that the penile cancer connection has not been considered valid since before he was born, he then insisted that foreskin has been *proved* to cause HIV transmission among heterosexuals in Africa! - If the American gay male health community does not understand foreskin, who does? Do I need to go to Europe to get *decent* medical care?

I believe that virtually all men in this country have questions about circumcision. I have brought this up with many friends and relatives who have told me that they had never talked about their feelings/questions/doubts on this subject with anyone, including wives/lovers. Most of the men related their curiosity of how their sexual prowess compared to men whose circumcision status was the opposite of their own.

I have seen many heavy men who, like me, have thick pubic fat pads and their remaining penile skin extends over their corona to varying lengths. The medical literature documents cases where children have been circumcised multiple times because of the false impression that not enough skin had been removed before. I suspect that was the case with my Jewish schoolmate when I was 9-10. He was very heavy and the head of his penis extended only slightly past his body. How is he going to function sexually without enough skin to cover his erection? I doubt that he is so happy about being "in the club" now. Though none of these men looks as intact as I do, I don't know how unique I am. I know one very heavy gay man who is convinced that they only cut off the tip of his foreskin. I have explained my situation to him and explained that his short foreskin might actually be just his penile skin pushed forward. However, he also appreciates foreskin, and doesn't even want to consider the possibility that he might actually be just as circumcised as most men.

“Permission was not asked of the parents. I have talked to several women of my mother’s generation who tell me that they had not been asked. The hospital just circumcised their sons without any prior notification. As one woman told me, ‘That’s just the way the hospital gave me back my sons’.”

After my mother’s death in 1998, I went through the letters written between my parents before I was born. My father was stationed in Germany and my mom returned to her hometown of Hagerstown, Maryland to await my birth and the availability of family housing in Germany. Much to my surprise, my mom asked my father if I should be circumcised if I was a boy. She said she thought it would be best. The question amazes me since both of my older brothers were circumcised and, in 1952, infant circumcision was almost universal for boys born in American hospitals. I wondered if there had been some complication with one of my brother’s circumcisions. My next older brother requested the medical records from his birth and there was nothing unusual in them. - (I do think it absurd that he was circumcised the same day that he was released 7 days after being born. If there had been any excessive bleeding, etc. it would have happened at home, not at the hospital. I realize that in those days it was believed prudent to wait about a week because of “blood clotting” considerations.) - I now suspect that this was the first time she had been asked by an obstetrician about her preference concerning circumcisions and that the topic may never have been discussed between my parents before. My understanding is that infant circumcisions were just done automatically as part of “standard care”. Permission was not asked of the parents. I have talked to several women of my mother’s generation who tell me that they had not been asked. The hospital just circumcised their sons without any prior notification. As one woman told me, “That’s just the way the hospital gave me back my sons”.

I have always been very angry with my father, blaming him for my circumcision. Although my mother stated in the letter that she thought I should be circumcised, I am quite sure she deferred to my father (a physician) on all “medical” issues. I never found a reply from my father, however, I probably didn’t have all the letters and he may have answered during one of their phone conversations. Maybe because I had a relatively good relationship with my mom, I do not blame my mother.

I DO blame my father. I blame him for much of my psychological damage. He is definitely to blame for not talking to me during the physical exams. My feeling is that if he (an INTACT man!) really believed the “medical” justifications for circumcision of the time, namely penile and cervical cancer prevention, then *why the hell didn’t he have himself circumcised to “protect” himself and my mother?* Why is it that he was willing to do something to *me* that

he was *not willing* to do to *HIMSELF*? The medical books of the 1940s/1950s said that while infant circumcision was best for disease prevention, adult circumcision was also very effective. He should have cut up his own penis!

Often when I was a child and introduced to people who knew my father, statements were made to me about how wonderful my father was. He was a well-respected physician, researcher, and professor who won awards for being such an excellent teacher. More than 30 years after his death, people who meet me and remember my father make these remarks without exception. I have often been told how lucky I was to have such a caring, compassionate person as my father. I have always felt most uncomfortable on these occasions, sometimes to the point of becoming nauseous. I can not believe that they were talking about *my* father. They were certainly not describing the person I knew. No matter how well I did in school and how good I was, it seemed to me that there must be something really wrong with me that caused my father to ignore me. While my father was alive, and for many years after his death, these introductions reinforced my belief that my father was so distant to me because he could not accept such a defective child.

Dealing with my own shortcomings:

As much as I can sit back and easily condemn my father for his shortcomings, I must also try to face my own. I have two nephews, born in 1977 and 1982, who are circumcised. I said *nothing* at the time. I certainly did not know all of the things I know now about the medical and sexual damage - (I was still a virgin when my oldest nephew was born), but I knew in my heart that circumcision was wrong.

With the first nephew, I *hoped* that my brother and his wife would have known of the 1975 A.A.P. statement that said circumcision was not necessary. I agonized over whether or not to talk to them and hoped the baby would be a girl. However, I could not bring myself to even bring the topic up. How can I blame my father for not saying anything to me, when I said nothing to my brother? I can't prove that my father had enough sense to realize that he should have talked to me. However, I do know that I knew better. How can I forgive my father when I cannot forgive myself for my silence? To compound my guilt, I still hadn't said anything when the second nephew was born. By the time he was born, I had enough sexual experience to know that circumcision is a crime.

Side note: As of 2001, both of my nephews tell me that they are glad to be circumcised because everyone else they know is also circumcised. They admit that it probably isn't a good thing to do to a child, but they don't think it is such a big deal. They are also very uncomfortable with the entire topic.

I cannot completely repair my own body, but I can try to stop the genital mutilation of others. I am now very vocal about my opinion. I do not leave my apartment without wearing a "genital integrity ribbon" and/or button and/or T-shirt. I will NOT be silent anymore!



“I really feel depressed and would love to hug someone and open up to them about my sexual feelings as well as how my circumcision affected me.”

“All I could see were beds lined up which made me stand back in terror. I tried to run, but my Mum and the Matron grabbed me to stop me from escaping... I remember thinking “What have they done? This can’t be normal, no one would allow it, especially not Mum and Dad.”

“Although this is an incredible world we live in, not many people will miss me when I am gone. I have been a complete failure in life and its move towards the next generation.”

My circumcision and the result it has had on my life, causing what is now known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

I am now in my late 60's, and I have no close friends, mainly due to the fact that I've always been terrified someone would make fun of me. Now in 2018 I have been diagnosed with prostate cancer, followed a couple of months later by a heart attack, both of which have made me even more conscious that I do keep things to myself. I really feel depressed and would love to hug someone and open up to them about my sexual feelings as well as how my circumcision affected me.

I have told three people about my hang-up about being circumcised, which seems to have made things worse. My oldest friend doesn't want to talk to me nowadays, while another would probably be panicky, as for the first, I don't think he would worry about it as he has his own circumcision and I would say he is bi-sexual, or he was when we were friends. The second friend is only a casual friend, but we opened up to one another after he told me he had been to the doctor as he had a red spot on his penis. Months later I told him I also had problems with mine; it was sore and inflamed. He asked me if it was under the foreskin, so I had to tell him I hadn't got one, which shocked him. Although 10 years older than me, he didn't know foreskins were totally removed with some circumcisions. The third friend is much younger than me. He's a Paramedic who I opened up to when I had a problem with my penis.

My Sexuality

This third friend changes the subject if I ever mention anything to do with sex or penises. Because of this I can't open up to him. I tried to, but I know he doesn't understand me, so to me he is just a friend who calls in once a week to see if I am still alive. I can't say anything to my brother either; he is totally anti-gay, and would definitely reject me if I ever told him I

was that way inclined. His wife who is Russian says it's a mental illness, so my sexual feelings are completely held back in those directions. Another thing is that I can't come out as Gay, as I don't really know that I am or not, which doesn't make sense as I've never really been attracted to women, but only for men with ginger hair.

In saying this, apart from my first friend who has ginger hair, and whose penis I did come into close contact with, I can't say I have ever seen any others in real life. In conclusion, I don't think I'm Gay, but just feel safer with other ginger men; "birds of a feather". In reality I could never have shown my penis to anyone before I found out on the internet that my penis was not a one-off butchery object, something I had thought for the previous 45 years.

My Circumcision

Anyhow this is my account about how I feel I was sexually abused when I was circumcised, and how the older I get the more annoyed I get about what was done to me. Today a lot is said about those who were sexually abused and how it affects them as they get older; but nothing is said about victims like me who also feel abused. I really get irritated when the Government, Police and Charities, say so much about paedophiles and institutions where boys were sexually abused, but ignore men like me who with the advice of NHS doctors were abused by having our penises butchered. We had no say in what was done to us, so I was just as abused as anyone who says they were abused by a paedophile, if not more so; as not only do I have the psychological scars, but I also have physical proof. How many abused men can show physical damage, not many I bet? To me the surgeon, Mr Joyce of Newbury District Hospital who put a scalpel to my penis was just as guilty as any paedophile for injuring me physically, psychologically, and socially. When I started work as an apprentice upholsterer in the mid 1960's, he would come to our workshop to buy curved needles, apparently they were cheaper to buy from us than the NHS. Just the sight of him turned my stomach. I hated him for what he had done to me and always wondered if he ever recognised me as one of the victims and whose penis he had abused.

I've always tried to prove I'm a real man, but since I was eight years old this has been almost impossible to prove after the removal of my foreskin and prepuce; the foreskin being the part that protrudes in front of the head, the prepuce being the skin which covers the head coronal ridge and sulcus groove. My parents didn't tell me what was going to happen to me, so maybe they didn't know I was about to lose my foreskin and half the skin down the shaft. Maybe they thought it would be just the tip that would be cut off, this being the most common in boys who were circumcised at birth, and if Dad had seen any, this probably would have been the sort he had seen. My mother on the other hand wouldn't have had any idea what to expect, she would have only known what Dad told her, and as he wasn't circumcised, he had no idea of what was about to happen to me either. As for the doctor, he wouldn't have gone into much detail with my Mum about what was going to happen to my penis.

I still recall the day in detail when I went to hospital for the butchery of my penis. My sister had told me I was going to hospital but didn't know what for. In the end I began to worry about what I was going for, not that I had any idea I was going to be left there for an

operation. I remember as the time was getting nearer for us to go, I went for a walk hoping that we wouldn't go. In the end I remember Dad calling me saying that it was time we went. So with this I came back to the house thinking that we would just go to the hospital and be back that afternoon. Mum and Dad then drove me to the hospital and parked outside. As we were about to get out of the car Dad said you better have this! It was my teddy. At that point I began to panic because why would I need my teddy. Anyhow, we went in and were told where to go. When Mum opened the door to the Ward, all I could see were beds lined up which made me stand back in terror. I tried to run, but my Mum and the Matron grabbed me to stop me from escaping. The Matron then asked my Mum if I had been told why I was there, she said no because they wouldn't have got me there if I had known. From then on, I knew I was to stay, but still didn't know what for. This was my first day in hospital. The next day I was given an injection in the bum and wheeled off to the Operating Theatre where I remember lying on the table looking up at a lot of bluish coloured lights shining down on me. After this I think I was given another injection and then fell asleep. The next thing I remember was waking up in the Ward with a bandage on my penis, but still not knowing what had happened to me.

I'll never be able to explain the shock I had on the third day of being in hospital when a nurse took me to have a salt bath and removed the sticky brown gauze from my penis. I remember my legs giving way and a shudder going down my back. The whole skin covering my knob had gone, and there were bits of prickly black thread sticking out of my blood dried shaft. I remember thinking "What have they done? This can't be normal, no one would allow it, especially not Mum and Dad." It was so horrible that I thought I must be the only one in the World with a penis like it. I literally felt you could see inside me, which technically you could. It was as if my bodies privacy had been cut away, there was nothing I could hide, not even the inside of my penis.

By chance I found this Guardian Newspaper report about NORM-UK/15 Square on the internet dated 2005 which is almost a mirror account of my own story, even down to my age and the black stitches around my shaft.

NORM-UK currently has just short of 300 members. Less than one inquiry in 10 results in membership, but it isn't strictly about the numbers.

"Men often want the information to restore," says Smith, "but they want to keep it to themselves. They are frightened about being found out. When they ring me up, they say, 'Please ensure that the information is in plain envelopes and don't put me on a mailing list.'"

John D was like that. He felt abused because his circumcision was unnecessary - a course of antibiotics had already cleared up his urinary infection. "But my father agreed with the doctor, and told me I was going to have a minor operation," he says. "I remember the nurses giggling as I was taken off to theatre. They wore these big sickly grins, and said, 'We're taking you to be done up now. Hee hee hee.' I was eight, but suffice it to say that *they* knew what was happening to me and *I* did not... I

remember waking up," says John D, "after the general anaesthetic had worn off, and looking down. My beloved penis had been replaced with wrinkled skin, a collar of thorns - the black stitches - and an ugly great dome on top. I experienced shock at first, later deep anger and resentment. The stitches disappeared, but the mutilation didn't. My father said, 'I didn't think it would look like that.' It was misinformed consent."

It was at this point I decided that apart from my mother and uncut twin brother, no one would ever see my penis again, a promise I kept to for the next twenty-three years. From that date onwards I was always frightened someone would see my penis and make fun of me. It was so frightening, I literally lost confidence in my body, so much so that I didn't like to show any part of it, so kept as many clothes on as possible, and I still do. I was reminded of this recently when I found a diary written by my sister in 1961, 3 years after I had been butchered. In it she tells of a holiday we had with an Aunt and Uncle and their son at Salcombe in Devon. She made a special note saying that "My brother had unbelievably and for the only day worn some swimming trunks and actually got his toes wet". She, (like everyone else) never knew why I was so self-conscious about my butchered penis. Eventually at the age of around 31 I broke my promise when a very close friend at work told me he'd been circumcised as a baby. He said it was because there had been a problem with his penis. Apparently, this was and still is a surgical excuse to defend the circumcisions of babies, even if there's no problem with the penis in the first place. Anyhow, I nervously told him I'd been circumcised, but added that it probably wasn't like his. His reply was that the only ones he'd seen were all like his own, so would I mind if he had a look at it. I remember thinking; "I've got to show him; it's the only chance I will get to see if I've been circumcised or not." With this in mind, I agreed on the condition I could see his too.

My Only Sexual Experience

As a pre-circumcised boy, it never bothered me for others to see my penis, but this was and still is the only time since then that my penis has been held by someone else. I remember as he caught sight of and then took hold of me that he seemed unsure with what he had in his hand. I too wasn't sure if it was because he was hoping for something larger, or because of my slightly throbbing purple knob pointing at him. Clearly, he hadn't seen one like it as he asked me if I was having an erection. When I said "Not really", he began to study my penis very closely. To make things worse he even asked how I wanked myself, which made me wonder: why ask that? As I could tell he hadn't seen one like it, I let him study me in detail, which included a close inspection of my coronal ridge and sulcus groove, finished off by him giving me a blow job. It was only when he finished and I got to see his penis that I realised why he'd asked me how I wanked myself; he'd still got a foreskin, it was only the tip that had gone from his, which I've learnt is a Brit Milah circumcision. It's done by pulling the outer layer of the foreskin forward and just removing the tip, but leaving most of the inner foreskin intact. With the sight of his knob looking like a rose-bud from the garden of Eden protruding from his shortened foreskin, it only confirmed mine wasn't a circumcision but something far more extreme. On reflection it's no wonder my penis fascinated him, especially if he'd only seen Brit Milah circumcisions before my Brit Periah circumcision.

Sadly, when I came to his penis, when I slid his skin back, I noticed it irritating him; so presumably I was beginning to arouse him. He didn't say stop, but as this was all very new to me and he pulled back I thought I better stop, though I would have loved to have studied his foreskin, prepuce and sulcus groove in detail. What did surprise me more than anything was how easily the skin slid over his knob. However, the only thing that did frustrate me was as a ginger he had shaved all his ginger pubes off, so I didn't get to run my fingers through them. I would also have loved to have compared his ginger colour with mine and maybe cut some off as a lasting reminder of our moment of intimate interest in each other's meat and two veg.

Over the following days we had several opportunities to talk about what we'd done and seen; the trouble was I wasn't brave enough. Besides how could I; it was only queers who were interested in other men's penises, something I couldn't admit to even if I was. Sorry to say that while he was the only person I almost opened up to, I didn't. Although I would have trusted him with my life, I still couldn't trust him to keep my penis or sexual inadequacies a secret. To be honest the whole incident worried me for weeks, would he keep my secret or not; after all he had no idea how I felt about my penis. To him it must have been just another penis, albeit one without an outer skin, and one I now know he thought was laughable.

My lack of penis and sexual knowledge remained like this for the next twenty years, then thanks to the Internet in 2002 I typed in circumcision and got the shock of my life. There were penises just like mine; I wasn't the only one whose skin had been totally cut away. While I have the scars on my shaft, these are not the only ones I have; there are emotional scars that can't be seen. The feeling that my life was ruined when my parents allowed me to be abused will never go away. I have now seen my childhood medical notes where the only one written in blood red ink was "Full Circumcision"; so, okay, I now know what the difference is between a full or partial circumcision, but why in red ink? Was my foreskin some sort of blood ritual prize for my doctor? I'll never know, but one thing is certain; the doctor, the surgeon, and my parents, ruined my sex life. One other remark in my records was that I had scarring which was the reason the Doctor used for my circumcision. Scarring can be caused by pulling the foreskin back before it's ready. I remember clearly my mother would stand me in the Belfast sink, rub soap on my penis, and if she could, force the skin back, so that's probably what caused the scarring and started my life of torment. At the time I had no way of knowing it, but it wasn't only the foreskin that was taken from my penis, but my sexual confidence too. They say "what you've never had you never miss". This is true; I still miss my foreskin and prepuce, if not sexual intercourse. This through need of nature to satisfy my natural sexual urges, and to keep my mutilated penis a complete secret from everyone, was totally replaced by my own safe and reliable handshake, in other words a wank. After living in the same house all my life with its memories of pain and torment I have now moved, only to be reminded of my early childhood by a Belfast sink in the utility-room, something we removed from our original home in the late 1970's.

My penis with its bluish grey head, reddish corona, and sulcus groove. According to the doctors notes I was circumcised in November 1958 when I believe only about three or four

percent of native British boys were circumcised by the NHS; in 2000 it's around 3.8% of non-Muslim or Jewish boys. This probably explains why when I went to Secondary School in 1961, I didn't see any other totally exposed penis heads on the other boys in the sports changing room, theirs were all safely covered with foreskins. If any had been like mine, I'm sure I would have noticed them, after all I knew what I was looking for when it came to a fully exposed purple knob with its crimson sulcus groove. In saying this there was one boy who did have an odd-looking penis. His foreskin was like my friends and only covered part of his knob, so I assume he too had been cut as a baby. I never imagined we'd been circumcised as I had always understood it was Jews who were circumcised, whatever that meant, while mine was just an abnormal but drastic amputation of the skin from my penis. Three to four percent of the fifty to sixty boys in my school year was two, so it looks as if we were that unlucky two. I also remember having an all-boys sex lesson where the teacher told us that some boys were circumcised for religious reasons; not that he said the skin was cut off completely or for no reason at all. The lesson petrified me as I thought the boys would start looking to see whose foreskin had been cut off. Luckily, he didn't go into detail, so nobody really knew what he was talking about; besides Christians weren't circumcised, and we were all Christians.

Personally, I wouldn't wish a circumcision on anyone, although I was glad my ginger friend had been. I don't like saying this, but at the time he was the only person I knew who might have had an idea of what it felt like to have an abused penis. What did change after our encounter was my attraction towards him. As I have said he had ginger hair, a colour that had fascinated me since my own started to darken in my teens. They say opposites attract, well for me it's the other way around. Since my teens I've had a fetish for ginger haired men, a fetish that became a real sexual crush on my friend.

To be marked out in life is awful for anyone, and in England those with ginger hair are certain to be made fun of, but add an odd looking penis to that and you really could be in for it. Luckily although at school I had taunts for my ginger hair, nobody realised I hadn't a foreskin; so, although my penis stood out like a bright purple saw thumb, I was never taunted for it. Maybe I got so good at hiding it, those who did see it must have thought my skin had just slipped back to its maximum position over the head. I'm sure if the boys in the changing room and showers had realised why my knob was so exposed, it and I would have been made brutal fun of. If I'd gone to a fee-paying school where boys are often butchered it may have been different, but I didn't. I went to a rural Secondary Modern School where no one appeared to have a penis like mine. However, the real question is why was I circumcised in the first place? While my skin wasn't easy to pull back, it did; so as it didn't hurt or stop me from pissing, I will always wonder why it was hacked off. Was it the doctor's way of claiming extra money from the NHS, or was it snobbery on the part of my parents who could say their son had been circumcised. Whatever it was, not only will I always think that I was abused, but it was when my childhood innocence ended, and my parents proved they were not the safe guardians I thought they were. No one will understand me when I say I used to pray to God that I would wake up one morning and find my penis had grown a foreskin overnight, that just shows how much it affected me.

Sadly, in May 2009 I told to my old ginger friend how much my circumcision had ruined my life. I was in two minds to tell him after he said on MSN that I should laugh at something, even if it was my penis. While he didn't realise what he was saying or what it meant to me, I explained about being upset by my penis. Since then, he has generally ignored me and my attempts to contact him, so it seems he is terrified of what I will say. I did see him face to face in October 2010 when a friend wanted to buy something from the shop he works at. Sadly, although we had a laugh, his attitude wasn't that of an old friend, but more of a customer from the past. It really hurt as it was proof that he's given up on me as a friend, even one who knows what his penis tastes like. In October 2012 I was so lonely that I begged him to call in; which he did and said we had a bit of a misunderstanding, so I know he remembered talking about my penis, although I don't know what he meant by the misunderstanding. In September 2016 he did attend the funeral of my mother which was good of him. He rang me a few days later saying he would come and see me, but he never did. Maybe it was because I gave him a hug after the funeral, I don't know; but I just needed to make physical contact with someone, and I thought he was the only one there I could touch.

Originally after only glimpsing my medical notes, I was too embarrassed to ask the doctor about them, however after putting it off for a couple of years, in December 2009 I plucked up the courage and asked him when and why I was circumcised. He was taken aback at first, but then went and got my old notes. He told me the consultation and operation were both done in November 1958; the reason being because my foreskin wouldn't retract. That wasn't true; it did, albeit with the help of stinging soap and my mother forcing it backwards. Another entry also mentioned "scarring", whatever that was. He tried to explain that it meant a tight foreskin, but wasn't sure what it meant in my case. When I told him that my circumcision had ruined my life, he said he was sorry and offered to get me help if I needed to talk to someone. I told him that it was far too late for that. He also asked me if it hurt when I had an erection. I said that it did slightly, but I don't get erections now in any case. He then said that perhaps too much skin had been removed. By this he was hinting that the skin around the bottom of my penis is pulled up the shaft when the penis grows in length. Maybe it was, but not knowing what the difference is, I can't tell. Apparently, it means when you get an erection the shaft skin pulls your penis backwards instead of allowing it to move forward. He then asked me if my father was circumcised; something I didn't know as penises were not things he would ever have talked about. I'm sure he wasn't though, as my mother would have told me in 2006 when we had a row over me being upset with what had been done to me. She insisted (after she found parts of this write-up) that I had never suffered from being circumcised. What she never realised, and something I only realised later was that within days I went from being a cock-sure little gingernob, to a boy who was scared-stiff someone might see me naked and make fun of my penis. Basically, I lost all self confidence in my body and life.

Another thing the doctor said was that at eight years old I should have been told what was going to happen, not that I would have understood what they were telling me or what long term effect it would have had on me. He said that even today he still recommends two or three boys a year to be circumcised for medical reasons, although he didn't really see a

reason why it should be done to a boy of eight, however boys of two and three wouldn't know or understand what was being done to them. To me this was a bit bizarre as a foreskin is a foreskin at whatever age you are. Maybe I should have gone into detail about what effect it had on my life. I am now kicking myself as I may have missed a chance of saving other innocent boys from going through the nightmare I've had. If my penis ever comes up in conversation again, I will ask him to seriously think before recommending it to another victim. Neither he nor the victim's parents can tell what the effect will be on his life.

The doctor then went on to say that circumcisions were first done to stop sand from getting under foreskins. Why he told me this I have no idea; I hadn't been likely to get sand under mine. I have seen other suggestions that it was a sign that you were a slave. What could be worse than marking a slave other than cutting his foreskin off? After being stripped naked to show their muscles, I bet everyone would have then been lined up with their hands tied behind their backs so they couldn't stop their penises from being butchered. Perhaps foreskins were some sort of visual receipt for the number the slave traders bought. After a slave was purchased his foreskin would be given as a receipt. At the end of the day you counted the foreskins on your counting stick; ten foreskins equals ten slaves; easy as one two three. Oh yes, and after 140 AD. when the whole foreskin began to be removed, on the way home the slave could be dragged across as much sand as necessary, always in the knowledge that it wouldn't get under a single foreskin. (I presume the phrase "getting under my skin" really eludes to the foreskin.)

One day in 2015 I mentioned to a friend that I had a itchy groin and that my knob was very inflamed. He said "What, under your foreskin!?" As he was a Paramedic and I knew he would keep it to himself, so I told him I hadn't got one as I had been circumcised. He didn't say anything, only that I should go and see the doctor. After a visit to my new doctor, she had a two second glance at my groin and penis and put me on a thrush medication. After a month of not getting any better, I went to back to see my old doctor. He took one look and put me on a medication for something called Jock Itch, and after two or three more months it cleared up, although I think it has left a blotchy change of colour to my knob.

In 2016 when my Paramedic friend and I were again talking about my circumcision, I told him that once when I was in Newbury, I had a sixth-sense that my Mum was reading this story of my circumcision. I rushed home to find she had been reading it and that she insisted that it hadn't affected me. I told my friend that it had; something he obviously can't understand. He then said, "Mine didn't affect me!" I said:

"Did you say you've been circumcised?" He said yes, and that it was done when he was born. It seems strange but why didn't he tell me last year when I told him I was circumcised. I then asked him if he had any foreskin at all, to which he said yes, it was only the tip that had been cut away. I said "Well you were lucky, my skin was completely hacked away when I was eight". He then said it was a funny age to be circumcised. Although he is trained Paramedic, I wonder if he has ever had a close look at a fully hand cut circumcision like mine. Maybe he should have a close look at one to see what is actually done to a penis when it is stripped of the entire skin by hand. Perhaps it's not the sort of thing they would

do in training, it would be too hands-on, besides it needs the penis to be attached to a living person who can give feed-back rather than one in a jar.

While both my friends who were circumcised only had the tips of their foreskins removed, my ginger friend was fairly open about his penis, while the Paramedic wasn't, and I can tell doesn't want to talk about it. It seems neither of them can understand my misery of losing the entire skin, while they only lost the part that protrudes in front of the penis head. As they probably didn't realise they were circumcised until later in childhood or even in adulthood, it's no wonder their circumcisions didn't affect them. Over several conversations I have had with the Paramedic, I have told him how much my circumcision left me feeling abused. I can tell that he has no idea how I feel or what I mean.

Now, of the three people I have told, my ginger friend doesn't want to know me, even though we were so close that we were able to compare our penises; nor does the Paramedic who doesn't want to know at all, and the one who will talk to me is a man with a complete foreskin, but no idea of what a penis looks like without one. Even he basically told me to go away when I called in to see him. Now alone and approaching 70, and Mum gone, I do need a friend to talk to. However, I haven't got anyone I can talk to about my day-to-day challenges.

I don't see anyone for days on end and can truly put this down to my circumcision and the effect it had on me. Although this is an incredible world we live in, not many people will miss me when I am gone. I have been a complete failure in life and its move towards the next generation.

End.

"I'm extremely upset about how I was treated and how ignored this problem is, I'm an unacknowledged victim of genital mutilation but I can't even complain!

I went to two Urologists last year and they simply told me that being circumcised is not a clinical problem and that it was all in my head."

When I was just 3 years old, my pediatrician tried to forcibly retract my foreskin, which made me cry, and as she saw I was resisting she diagnosed me with skin adhesions and phimosis, so she recommended circumcision.

My parents agreed to it and I was mutilated about a year later, in a hospital in Madrid by a pediatric surgeon (not an urologist).

Ever since then I've had pain in my penis, either from chaffing against underwear or erection pain (I do not have enough skin to accommodate for erections, my penis is 17cm and when

doctors cut they don't know how much skin the boy is going to need, so it's something they don't even take into account).

I've had a lifelong sexual trauma due to this and I realized it was all due to circumcision last year, because my boyfriend is intact and the evidence was right in front of me.

Ever since last year I've been restoring but I'm extremely upset about how I was treated and how ignored this problem is, I'm an unacknowledged victim of genital mutilation but I can't even complain! I went to two Urologists last year and they simply told me that being circumcised is not a clinical problem and that it was all in my head.

This is why I want to get into activism in order to force a discussion about the practice in Spain and hopefully be a part of the world-scale intactivist movement.

"I was in late high school when I found out I was circumcised. I was immediately upset; I felt disgusted and violated to have lost a part of me, even without knowing the function or purpose of a foreskin at the time. I have since harboured emotional hang-ups regarding my circumcision, often feeling lesser than intact men and jealous of intact men."

"I have had issues with chafing and numbness with all of my sexual partners; I have been told to stop due to pain or excessive longevity of sessions. Lubricant is necessary for sex. Wearing a condom essentially eliminates all physical sensation I feel in my genitals. After a certain amount of time having sex, I feel very numb and I am sometimes unable to finish at all."

Hello,

Please find some information regarding my circumcision and how it has affected me below. If you do share this story, please only use my first name, and do not specify my exact age.

1. Your age.

I am in my twenties.

2. Your background and reason for circumcision, if known. (e.g. atheist upbringing, with a medical circumcision).

I was born in British Columbia, Canada. Circumcision was performed due to the Doctors advice, and my dad's belief that it was just something done to boys. Later in life, I talked to my mom regarding the circumcision; she told me that she would not have had my younger brothers done after she learned exactly what the procedure was from it being performed on me, but performed it on them to prevent jealousy.

3. How old were you when you received your circumcision?

Roughly 1 week old.

4. How do you feel circumcision has affected your life?

I was in late high school when I found out I was circumcised. I was immediately upset; I felt disgusted and violated to have lost a part of me, even without knowing the function or purpose of a foreskin at the time. I have since harboured emotional hang-ups regarding my circumcision, often feeling lesser than intact men and jealous of intact men. I would say I feel a type of dysphoria. Later in life, I did research on what the function and purpose of both the foreskin and it's removal are, which made me more upset as I feel I will never experience sex naturally.

5. How has your circumcision affected your relationships with others, (e.g. partners, parents or religious/cultural community?)

- I have had issues with chafing and numbness with all of my sexual partners; I have been told to stop due to pain or excessive longevity of sessions. Lubricant is necessary for sex. Wearing a condom essentially eliminates all physical sensation I feel in my genitals. After a certain amount of time having sex, I feel very numb and I am sometimes unable to finish at all. Emotionally, there is a lot to unpack. There are feelings of inadequacy from being unable to finish and having to explain to my partner that I won't finish today. Feelings of guilt from hurting my partner, which turns to feelings of incompleteness as I would likely not be chafing my partner if I was intact.

6. As many other details and thoughts that you wish to share.

- As a teenager, I did not understand how masturbation worked as I did not seem to derive pleasure from touching myself. At some point, I was very sexually frustrated and decided to learn to masturbate; there were also kids in my school talking about it, so I felt weird that I had not been able to ejaculate yet. It took me about 2 months of trying to learn. During this time, I tried many things to try to ejaculate, but they did not work. Oftentimes, I would chafe or tear my skin very badly, requiring me to take a break for a couple days. When I did finally learn a technique that worked, I again had the problem of chafing and tearing of skin, though I was excited to have hit an important teenage boy milestone as I was finally able to ejaculate. I did not learn I was circumcised for a few more years, so I thought this was normal.

When I was 26, I decided to start foreskin restoration. I am still undertaking this, and I expect it to take another year or so before I stop. This has greatly alleviated problems with chafing already. Emotionally, I also feel good to take control back of my body. The only

downside to this process is it makes me aware of my circumcision on a daily basis, though the dysphoria is disappearing as I progress. I have talked with my girlfriend about this. She is very supportive and happy for me. We of course have decided we will not circumcise any boys we happen to have in the future.

Thank you

"I tried restoring in 1985 even though I didn't have any information on it and everyone told me that I was crazy... I believe that I've regrown back 95% of what was lost from circumcision...

Once I gained total coverage of the glans, I gained sexual pleasures and overall mental health benefits that I had never experienced before. That little piece of foreskin has 'magically' done more for my sexuality, relationship, and overall mental wellbeing, than any drugs or psychiatrist could ever do."

Age:

77

Your background:

Six year military veteran. Now retired from thirty-seven years at a port facility.

Reason for circumcision:

Against my parents' orders, I was circumcised by a local small hospital. They were not allowed to cut my younger brother.

How old were you when you received your circumcision?

A day or two.

How do you feel circumcision has affected your life?

Today we know about many things that negatively affects a child that will last a lifetime. I know that the first half of my life was something akin to a person that grew up without a tongue. I survived, but life was lacking in many necessary and pleasurable things that a person that wasn't mutilated as a child would not have faced. Many men aren't as lucky as I was, as proven by the many suicides and family violence cases.

How has your circumcision affected your relationships with others?

(In reverse order) religion was/is a major driver of the insanity that is circumcision. My parents were always opposed to Male Genital Mutilation, so there wasn't a conflict over it. Wives were a different matter. My first marriage ended in divorce. No doubt that circumcision was problematic. The second one almost failed until we discovered the extent that circumcision played in our problems and were able to begin remedial actions.

As many other details and thoughts that you wish to share.

Many individuals place privacy high on their priority list. That isn't the case with me. I am reasonably concerned about a bad guy getting information on my meagre finances. Other than that, everything else is an open book. And why not? I don't feel as if I have anything to hide and besides, a few clicks on a computer and pretty much every place and everything that I've ever done is readily accessible.

I didn't connect my lack of sexual satisfaction with having been circumcised until I became totally impotent around 45 (Looking back, I now know that the powerful sexual desire brought on by hormones were only minimally satisfied by intercourse). By that time, the sensitivity of my penis was essentially zero and even when the doctor prescribed Viagra, it didn't help.

I tried restoring in 1985 even though I didn't have any information on it and everyone told me that I was crazy. They were wrong and I'm now fully restored (Circumcision Index 9+) and I believe that I've regrown back 95% of what was lost from circumcision. The problem now is that I almost waited too long. I'm 77 years old and my mate is having serious medical problems, so we are lucky to have sex once a week now. Still, I would try restoring all over again because life became better and better during the years that I was restoring. And, once I gained total coverage of the glans, I gained sexual pleasures and overall mental health benefits that I had never experienced before.

It appears that by restoring our foreskin, our DNA must recognize that the new foreskin is supposed to include those things that were amputated when circumcised. It is like the ability to grow new skin and supporting structures after a serious injury. The best part of restoring has been what I call the foreskin brain. That little piece of foreskin has "magically" done more for my sexuality, relationship, and overall mental wellbeing, than any drugs or psychiatrist could ever do.

Most individuals that have experienced genitalia mutilation as a child don't even know or understand the damage it causes in their lives. Even when evidence is presented, they typically reject it and often become quite angry and defensive because they naturally don't want to confront the fact that they are damaged (especially, their manhood).

The missing foreskin is not just the loss of a piece of skin! It is the core substance of being a man. It has much more to do with our ability to be "normal" than most people will admit. Yes, just like with everything in nature, there are undoubtedly some men that are missing the foreskin and don't have any detectable issues. Otherwise, the vast majority, sometimes not even realizing it, have devastating side effects. Examples are the destroyed marriages due to circumcision causing sexual dysfunction and mental illness as exhibited by the

outrageous examples of spousal and child abuse in this country (USA). There's evidence that much of the gun violence is connected to babies/children and men having been cut because of the insanity of circumcision.

As mentioned above, we are extremely "lucky" that the brain on our head is able to compensate in many ways for the trauma caused by circumcision. To wit: I lived for over 40 years and never once connected the fact that having been circumcised at birth, was causing the many issues that had complicated life. Then (like has happened with lot's of other men) I lost the ability to perform at all. The extent of erectile dysfunction not only affected my abilities in the bedroom but it affected many other aspects of living (job performance, relationships with members of the community, etc.) and, circumcision negatively affects all women, not just from sexual relations with their significant other but with men throughout society (a lot of circumcised men turn into women haters because they tend to put the blame on the mother). Like in my 40/45 years of ignorance, many women also aren't aware of the source of their problems. One tiny example: I can't put a number on the men that I'm aware of, that blame and hate their mothers and women in general, because they blame women for authorizing what was done to them without their consent. Like so many thing's, there is a minority but way to many women that do deserve condemnation because of their refusal to learn the facts. And they are still having their babies tied down and subjecting them to untold torture. But don't just blame women. Many men are the ones demanding that their sons be circumcised/tortured. And in today's world, there is absolutely no justification.

One more point about those women that promote MGM. On parenting website's and in conversations with friends and on social media, I have observed them being guilty of criminal promotion of the "crime against nature" — circumcision. Some have gone so far as to beg for donations on the Go Fund Me site in order to hire someone to torture their child.

I love women and also greatly appreciate their unique genitalia. But it is breath-taking to hear many of them promoting circumcision by describing how disgusting, nasty, ugly and unnecessary, *they* think the foreskin is. Have they not viewed (either first-hand or through videos and medical journals) the design, makeup and placement of their genitalia? They too, typically have a foreskin. Someone once said: What kind of engineer would design a playground right next to a sewage treatment plant? The vulva/vagina and anus are pretty much interconnected and regularly transfer fluids, etc. between them. At least in the male, the glans/foreskin have several inches and a wall (scrotum) between them and the anus. The rational attitude about sex organs should be: It is what it is. Enjoy it!

Remember: The foreskin is the ice cream. The penis shaft is only the popsicle stick.

"Despite the ancestry, I still find it upsetting & embarrassing to have to admit I've been circumcised."

Hi, I was born in Edinburgh in 1966 . At 3 years of age I was circumcised.

My medical records state I had problems associated with a tight foreskin although no phimosis. After 2 visits to the Doctor for an examination I was sent to hospital for circumcising. Although I was unaware of what was happening at the time, I have a vague recollection of being restrained & the excruciating pain of my foreskin being removed.

Unfortunately, from about 14 years of age I was subjected to ridicule, bullying & teasing from classmates at school who then made sure everyone knew about my circumcision. I was the laughingstock of the showers & locker room. As a result, from that day on I feel very embarrassed & self-conscious about the way I look. Even now I think about it every day with negative feelings, paranoia & sadness.

My frenulum was left on but has caused sensitivity issues for me...

I was never given a proper explanation, although my parents did present me with a pamphlet as a teen showing the differences in the Male anatomy. I remember the upset and tears of matching the 'circumcised' illustration.

My mother only ever spoke once about it... Only insisting I wasn't Jewish. The irony now is that I've found out my ancestors were orthodox Jews, so at least I can feel some connection with my family history.

Despite the ancestry, I still find it upsetting & embarrassing to have to admit I've been circumcised.

Thanks for allowing me to share this.

“When I asked my mother why she did it, her response was:

“To look like your father.”

That's ridiculous right? As if I've stood there comparing penises.”

I am a 56 year old Australian. I was a victim of Ritual Infant Circumcision at birth. I never saw an intact penis until I was 18, as most boys were circumcised here in those days. I then did some research and found out what happened to me. When I asked my mother why she did it, her response was: “To look like your father”.

That's ridiculous right? As if I've stood there comparing penises.

Never realising restoration was possible I resigned myself to being a circumcised guy.

It has impacted my enjoyment of sex, the sensation stopping in early 40s. I just put up with it but certainly derived no pleasure from intimacy at all.

It was my late wife who discovered foreskin restoration when we were researching my sensitivity issues. I began in earnest in November 2016 and am now quite advanced in my foreskin restoration.

Unfortunately, I cannot attest to the increased pleasure of intimacy now as my wife lost her life to breast cancer in 2018.

It has been a very emotional journey as well, one I was not expecting, but I don't regret one moment of my journey to foreskin pleasure once more.

Posted byu/civilrights-beam

25-06-21

I just want to bash my head into a wall until I die of brain trauma

The whole is thing is just like total bullshit. It make me question the point of even being alive every waking moment of my life. I'm not sure if I can even wait 5+ years for a potential solution, even then I still have to deal with the trauma of being so deeply violated. And even for the potential solution, it's like 10k, I could only feasibly get around 8k within 5 years, but perhaps the grind of working a job will keep me going. Just posting this because I need to let out my feelings that have been brewing for the past weeks.

-

Posted byu/stitches00

25-06-21

feeling down

I'm so angry at the fact that I have to restore. A lot of people don't admit it but to see results you have to feel pain. The blunt outer skin to inner skin transition between my fingertips feels so violating and instantly triggers me. Most devices aren't comfortable but also not wearing anything is uncomfortable.

Some days I'm optimistic and can try to remind myself that one day I will be fully restored, the next day I can be grieving the loss of trust to my parents. I feel so alone with this my brothers don't understand and my boyfriend doesn't care either. I want so badly to destroy this evil practice but I can't.

How am I supposed to feel good about contributing to a society that failed me? I have to pretend that this hasn't destroyed me and act like it's not on my mind and depressing me 24/7. I'm so sickened that humans have let this happen. It actually shocks me every day and it has been for several months. I want it to get easier and I want to live a normal life. Confronting this grief has been the most difficult thing.

(NSFW) While masturbation has technically gotten easier it has been way more difficult emotionally. Watching intact gay p*rn is a kick to the face as it truly shows me what I'm missing. It shows me how much skin they took and holy fucking shit is it a LOT of skin. Anytime I feel like I'm making progress is think this is actually just forced coverage and its going to take me a decade to reach what I was supposed to have.

I can't love my parents after what they've done to me. I recently moved away from my mother and although she is a nice caring person, I hate her. I cannot fake this love back anymore because she and my father caused the biggest pain in my life. She will never understand the level of hurt and my father will never care.

-

Posted byu/INFP-of-course

24-06-21

Whoever Started This Subreddit Is the Best

If they (or any moderators) are reading, I just wanted to say how happy it makes me that this subreddit exists. It's such a blessing to be able to speak my mind without someone swooping in to police my tone, or try to fix me. I love the fact that gaslighting and toxic positivity aren't tolerated. I think you're doing a great job with this subreddit. (And I hope you don't pay too much attention to the types of people who would criticize it unfairly because they don't understand the value of safe spaces...yet.) I come here every so often when my anger over cultural circumcision is boiling over, and it's like being able to breathe again, afterward. You help me return to the happy, positive person I'd like to be, without having to mask my valid feelings about cultural circumcision to get there.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

Also, it must be tough to commit to moderating a place like this if you are yourself a victim of non-consensual circumcision. I admire you and I hope you guys don't get burnt out by it!

-

Posted byu/LostLifeBrokenDreams

24-06-21

Circumcision ruined my life.

I had the girl of my dreams just a few weeks ago. She was everything to me. We had been together for years.

When we moved in I learned of what happened to me shortly after. I had a bit of a mental breakdown and never truly recovered. The strain it put on her caused her to lash out at me.

I have felt like a worthless human being ever since I learned the truth. I couldn't let it go no matter how much I tried. I confronted my mother, the facilitator of my circumcision, and she told me to get over it. That sent me further spiraling into hell.

I tried so hard to let this go. I went to therapy. Jumped from antidepressant to antidepressant, but in the end I couldn't.

She left me recently and is now about to go on a date with a man I know is not circumcised. I just had a mental breakdown knowing this. This man may get to experience everything with her that I could not. I failed her.

I may end my life. I have nothing left to live for.

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Posted byu/Xxy2Z

23-06-21

Feeling betrayed by my intact father

I feel like I'm the only one in my situation. The few people my age I do know who are circumcised are done for good reason. Well, not good reasons of course because nobody deserves to be circumcised, but at least reasons. Religious reasons or because their father was circumcised. My father is intact. It hurts me everyday to know this and I haven't been able to look at my father the same way or feel close to him anymore. I feel like the reason my father circumcised me has to do with the fact he probably wished he had been circumcised all his life. He was born in the early 60s when many men were still circumcised. If he wanted to be circumcised so bad though, he should've just got done later on life. I think he still should get circumcised even though he's 60 years old to make up for me getting circumcised. It's the least he can do. I know another big factor in me getting circumcised has to do with my mom's brothers being circumcised and them doing it to their sons too. I wish my mother would've known better at the time but at least she's apologized to me for doing it and regrets doing it. It makes me sick to think such an ancient and unnecessary practice was done to me when I was born after the new millennium and it wasn't even done to my father who's 40 years older than me. Is there anyone else who can relate to my situation? Being cut and having an intact father? Message below or DM me if you can. I'm starting to feel like I'm the only one in this situation.

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Posted byu/Ballbagth

20-06-21

My story : What kind of cruel joke is this?

Hi all, I've been a long time lurker in here but this is my first post

For the last few years (im 42) I, like most of you have been having a really tough time dealing with the fact that I'll never get to experience the greatest pleasure that a male human being can experience. I feel robbed & cheated of my God given right to be whole but whats happened to me recently is even worse.

I started to restore and keep my glans covered with a retainer or manhood over the last few years.

When I began you could say that feeling wise glans was a 2/10 and the underside of the glans where the frenulum used to be was also about 2/10.

As time progressed, keeping the area covered as much as possible and moisturising often, my glans sensitivity went up to about a 4/10 but more importantly I began to notice the frenulum area reawakening. It started to become very erotic to touch all of a sudden and became my main pleasure source. I'd say it went to a 5/10 and sex in general started up become pleasurable enough to the point that I was truly satisfied.

Any further improvements from here were a bonus and I was finally optimistic about what the future may bring.

Unfortunately this optimism was short lived.

One morning I woke up ready to moisturise anticipating that nice newly discovered erotic feeling of when I run my frenulum scar and to my shock and surprise there was nothing.

No erotic sensation whatsoever, literally like 0/10.

I immediately panicked. I thought to myself, Did I hurt or damage myself during restoration somehow? I didn't notice any pain prior or any single event that could cause this damage.

I then thought maybe it was just temporary and I just need to give it a break and let it recover.

Well sadly it's been 2.5 years since then and the feeling has never returned. It's still 0/10 in the pleasure scale. Mind you it's not numb, I feel that area just fine, but it feels just like my shaft does or any other part of my body.

What's worse My glans have also declined to a 1/10. It is often feels cold to touch even though the rest of my body is warm.

I'm so depressed with life now and I feel like it's some kind of cruel joke on me.

Not only was I circumcised and robbed of the chance to feel this amazing natural experience. I was then given a small preview or insight to what sex should feel like only to have that robbed from me also and taken back to even worse than what I started.

I cant explain how good it felt at my peak and mind you I know that is not even close to what I imaging a 10/10 intact penis feels.

I have now have to suffer through two losses. My original loss and now this new loss which is even worse than when I started this journey.

I still have no idea what caused the change for the worse.

I've tried changing my diet. Tried all kinds of supplements, tried keeping the area covered and protected but nothing has worked. I went to a urologists and he was absolutely useless. Had no idea and told and to take cialis.

I now struggle daily knowing this had happened to me and honestly don't know how long I can carry on. I have no drive in life now. Whenever I am aroused I'm immediately reminded of my condition and it drives me crazy.

My partner is gorgeous and supportive of my situation and sex with her would be so amazing if I was intact. I'd give anything to feel what she feels, to be in that moment of ecstasy with her rather than just watching it from a distance like I do.

I'm frankly just broken. Completely broken :(

I honestly look forward to death and to this whole ordeal being over.

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Posted byu/Ok-Yam-369

20-06-21

An odd sensation finally explained

Throughout my whole life I have occasionally felt a very odd and unpleasant visceral sensation arising from my penis and seeming to travel up to my abdomen. Almost like a tickle, with something reminiscent of that which you would feel during arousal but only during the most inopportune times. I've always hated that sensation because it made me feel very uncomfortable and somehow vulnerable. It's difficult to explain. For years I was not able to understand why it happens or what triggers it, but I've finally figured it out. I only get that sensation when stimulating my circumcision scar. I've realized this as I've been restoring and obviously playing around with that part of my penis more and more. As I'm doing this, I've come to notice just how sensitive that scar tissue is compared to the rest of my penis. I can almost always induce that unpleasant "tickle" sensation when rubbing on the scar. When it happens throughout the day, it's because my underwear is rubbing against that very same part. It's kind of upsetting to realize just how sensitive that little remnant skin is, and just how much more of it I could've had. My life would have been radically different if I had my full sensitivity, I just know it. The scar is like a little window into that full sensory experience that I'll never know. That strange sensation is a product of my mutilation.

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Posted byu/Far-Reality4325

18-06-21

you stole my dick from me

I read today that i've never had real sex because I was cut. i never thought of it that way, but it's true. everything, gone. in the blink of an eye. some asshole with a knife permanently cut off all the best parts of my penis. they tore my fused skin away from my penis head, clamped my tiny fucking dick with thousands of pounds of force and then ripped the protective skin from my yet undeveloped manhood. nobody asked me if i wanted to lose all my sexual tissue. nobody asked me if maybe i might want to explore my sexuality with my partner through my frenulum or ridged band many years later. when i see sites like r/thatsthespot and r/foreskin, i get angry. i was robbed of the rightful use of my penis. i was robbed of real sex. i was deliberately raped of rich natural climaxes that whole men get when they are having intercourse. i can barely even feel it when my dry keratinized dick enters my partner's vagina. it's not fair. they took something from me. they stole my dick. they fucking tampered with my sexuality!! how do you do that to another man??

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Posted byu/ApatheticHumor

17-06-21

Silver

You'd have a hard time in Russia.

Those are the words that my mother told me, as she is Russian and my father is American. She moved here and met him. Since circumcision is routinely done here in America, she was persuaded by him to have me go through it. The circumcision rate in Russia is 12% while in America it is 81%. I would be living in Russia right now, but I would most likely be intact. I would not have to face the issues that I do about sexual insecurity, while dealing with anger and resentment toward my parents, for both having me go through the sexually invasive procedure without my consent, and taken away a vast majority of the sensitivity of my penis. This robbing me of experiencing the fullest of the greatest pleasure known to a guy. While leaving me with suicidal thoughts and constant issues with really bad anger. But, hey, America has a better quality of life. Right?

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Posted byu/hhhjjghuio

17-06-21

Does anyone else have a botched circumscion?

When I was circumscised as an infant the doctor removed to much skin(I think) and I had to go in for a reconstruction of my penis at the age of 7. I have very bad scars and the underside of my dick is not smooth. I am too embarrassed to ask my parents and wanted to ask y'all if you had something similar

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Posted byu/[deleted]

16-06-21

Battling Suicidal Thoughts

I feel so sexually violated. And I feel abandoned by God, society, everything. I don't know what to do I want to scream.

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Posted byu/adsplodge

16-06-21

I just want a voice.

Writing about my pain here won't make a difference. Why write then? Well this whole situation doesn't make any sense anyway. I have been mutilated and have no way to remedy it. Restoration is traumatic and takes way too long because I stop during depressive episodes.

Foregen probably won't even be available until after I'm 40, which is half of my life wasted in this despicable body. And that's not even guaranteed.

All the relationships I have ruined because I can't deal with this leaves me pretty alone, not that talking to anyone has helped. Either they support my cause and give me empathy, which depresses me, or they don't see the problem (or support cutting), which angers me. Either way, I end up distancing from them so my friends are for the most part acquaintances now that I fake being happy around for some reason.

My mother is sorry that this happened but I usually can't even bring myself to answer her calls because seeing her calling makes me nauseous. She gets upset when I answer and sound depressed and then my father calls me complaining that I'm upsetting her. I never had a good relationship with my father so talking to him about it will probably never happen.

I am so tired of working so hard to sustain my life when I can't even enjoy it. I'm working in order to live until it can be regenerated and that's pretty much it. I feel that society is so fucked there's no point in doing anything. If I'm so expendable, why did they not just kill me?

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Posted byu/Successful_ChadErwin

Religious Circ (Infant)

15-06-21

Maybe I don't deserve to have my whole Body

I was cut as an Infant. I initially felt nothing but Rage and Anger when I first grasped the truth of my Circumcision. Now, I'm feeling nothing but anguish and can't get past this. I'm constantly contemplating suicide since I don't feel like I want to live this life anymore and couldn't live it to the fullest regardless of what I try.

I can't help but think that I deserve to have been mutilated and don't deserve to have my full body or that it's a luxury that restoration or money can't buy. I know there's nothing that I could've done about it but maybe I deserved it somehow.

Please don't mention restoration in the comments. It's far too traumatizing for me and doesn't help at all with my sorrow. It doesn't hurt me physically but I can't help but get frustrated and have thoughts of what happened to me, like being strapped down and cut

with me being powerless to stop it. If only I had been cut as a Teenager or something and got to experience my full body and could've at least tried to fight back.

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Posted byu/theresajuly

14-06-21

Is there anyway to regain genital sensitivity?

My penis is numb and i feel very little pleasure when i ejaculate. I think i am only ejaculating and not orgasming. I was cut as an infant and have a very tight circumcision

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Posted byu/[deleted]

09-06-21

I'm fucking done

I'm done with all this.

Since my youth of terrible sexual experience that left me traumatized and ashamed of myself (unable to maintain an erection during sex, inability to orgasm, I can't feel a fucking thing in my dick) I stopped even trying to have sex or relationships. I started trying to restore thinking it would help. I've been at it 5 fucking years at this point and it seems like all it's done is made the skin a little more loose. No change in "sensation" or coverage or any of that shit. And now, I'm getting some kind of bend in my dick. Doctor thinks it's peyronie's. Maybe I somehow injured myself while restoring. Whatever it is, I can't restore anymore because any type of tugging causes pain.

I thought I did everything right, tried every device, tugged religiously every, for 5 years now, and it's gotten me nothing and now my dick is in an even worse state than before. But even if I could keep restoring, at this rate I'm going to be a fucking old man before I even get close to being "done" with dick that's a fraction as good as it should be. I haven't had sex or a relationship of any kind in years. Maybe Foregen finally comes out in 30 years just in time for me to get it done right before I fucking die if I make it that long.

But even if all that works out, I no longer even want to have any connection to this society. I've tried to talk to people about this. I don't want to talk to anyone about this anymore. Everyone is so fucking stupid and blind. I have nothing but hate for all of them.

I feel like all of this is a grand, cruel, cosmic joke, made specifically to crush Me. It's working for all these other guys, even if it's not the best solution it still gives them some chance to get back a bit of what was taken from them and heal. But not me I guess. I thought I had some hope to recover something like a normal life, that had been taken away from me, and

now that's gone. At this point I really just want to throw all this shit in the trash, completely forget about all of this, embrace my life of celibacy until life becomes too intolerable and then just check out.