



circumcision

a lifetime of medical benefits



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Newsletter: Male Circumcision Benefits Women's Health

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Sexually active women prefer the circumcised penis, mainly because of genital hygiene and the opportunity for more varied sex, according to previous published evidence from London and the U.S. Midwest. Now it has been shown that circumcision in their male sexual partners helps women by preventing cancer of the cervix, one of the most common and deadliest cancers in women worldwide.

It has long been noticed that cervical cancer is much less common in women sexual partners of men circumcised for religious reasons, mainly Moslems and Jews. In these same circumcised men penile cancer is rare compared to uncircumcised men. The link between penile and cervical cancer was found to be the human papilloma virus (HPV). Data from 1987 support the concept that cervical cancer in women was associated with genital HPV in their male partners. In 1993 a study from India, where only Muslims circumcise, found decreased cervical cancer in Muslim women compared to Hindu women. Among 311 penile cancer cases none were in Muslim men.

Evidence published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine (2002) established the link between circumcision, penile HPV infection and cervical cancer. The report summarizes findings from 1913 couples, from 7 separate case controlled studies in 5 different countries. Penile HPV infection was found to be 3 times as common in uncircumcised men, and there was a significantly reduced risk of cervical cancer in the female partners of circumcised men.

Newborn circumcision has been shown to protect males over a lifetime from multiple disorders-including infant kidney infections, HIV and other sexually transmitted disease, local penile infections and dermatoses, and penile cancer. Now we know that male circumcision benefits women as well by helping to prevent cervical cancer, a widespread, deadly disease.

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