

DOCTORS OPPOSING CIRCUMCISION (D.O.C.)

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*“Fear, pain, crippling, disfigurement and humiliation are the classic ways to break the human spirit.
Circumcision includes them all.”*

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For Immediate Release:

Seattle--Doctors Opposing Circumcision commends and applauds the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia (CPSBC) for its adoption and publication of a progressive new policy statement, *Infant Male Circumcision*, authored by Dr. Peter Seland, deputy registrar of the CPSBC.

The statement cuts through decades of medical myths and gets to the actual medical evidence of injury and harm that is caused by unnecessary non-therapeutic neonatal circumcision. Moreover, the statement applies 21st century concepts of human rights and bioethics to a surgical procedure that was introduced into medical practice in the late 19th century. Not surprisingly, the CPSBC finds the bioethics of the procedure to be questionable. It says that circumcision may be carried out only if it is in the “best interests” of the child, including protection of the child’s legal rights to security of the person, life, and bodily integrity.

The CPSBC warns medical doctors to tell parents that circumcision is NOT recommended by medical authorities, and says that infant male circumcision has NO medical or prophylactic value, so doctors must tell parents of the risks and harms inherent in the surgical operation. The College noted that the foreskin is composed of highly erogenous tissue that protects the glans of the penis, and that the removal of the foreskin can lead to urinary tract infection, urinary retention, meatal stenosis, and hemorrhage resulting in death.

The College says doctors have NO obligation to perform circumcision at parental request and they must tell parents the current opinions in bioethics that dissuade against performing the operation.

The death of a previously healthy one-month-old boy who bled to death after circumcision prompted the College to reconsider risks inherent in every circumcision. It now says that benefits, if any, do not exceed risks.

Dr. Seland commented to the *Victoria Times-Colonist*, “What we're attempting to do with this document is have physicians and parents weigh the medical risks and benefits of the procedure.”