

Danish Medical Association

Profession and Law

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The medical association's policy regarding circumcision of boys without medical indication

Circumcision should not be done without the informed consent of the person self

The medical association believes that circumcision of boys without medical indication is ethically unacceptable if the intervention is carried out without the informed consent of the person on whom the intervention is performed. Circumcision of boys should therefore not be carried out before the boy has obtained the authority to independently opt for the intervention.

Reasons for the Medical Association's position

Any surgical intervention entails a risk of complications, and therefore surgical interventions should, as a starting point, be limited to situations where they are likely to be a health benefit to the patient. The Medical Association does not believe that it has been documented that circumcision entails a health benefit advantage for male children.

Circumcision involves pain and discomfort for the child being circumcised. The Medical Association believes that medical interventions that involve pain or discomfort for minors, should be limited to situations where the intervention is a clear one health benefit for the person. The medical association does not believe that such a benefit is documented.

Male circumcision is a surgical procedure that permanently changes the boy's body anatomy. With the intervention, the child's opportunity to decide on his own is reduced body as well as to influence one's own cultural and religious belonging. The medical association therefore finds it best, in accordance with the individual's right to self-determination, that the decision about circumcision is left to the person once he has reached the age of majority.

Elimination of circumcision of male children without medical indication

The process towards the elimination of non-medical male circumcision indication is complex and should be handled in dialogue with the population groups for whom male circumcision has a special religious or cultural meaning. The most important considerations in the transition towards the elimination of circumcision should be those concerning children's health, including minimizing unauthorized interventions.