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# Sweden restricts circumcisions



Swedish Jews and Muslims object to the law  
A law passed by the Swedish Parliament restricting the circumcision of boys goes into effect on Monday.

Circumcisions will now be allowed only under anaesthetic, and with a doctor or nurse present.

Swedish Jews and Muslims object to the new law, saying it violates their religious rights.

The law was introduced after a Muslim boy died while being circumcised.

But, according to the website of Stockholm's Jewish community, a government commission appointed after the three-year-old's death found that the circumcision had been carried out by a registered physician, and that the cause of death was an overdose of anaesthetics.

## Health benefits debated

A BBC science correspondent says there has been much debate over the medical benefits of male circumcision - some studies say it reduces the chance of contracting a sexually transmitted disease and improves hygiene levels, while others show there to be no health benefit whatsoever.

Stockholm's Jewish community is now deciding how to take the matter further.

They say they will not be able to find nurses or doctors to help them

## Circumcision Act

**A boy under the age of two months old may be circumcised by a person who is not a registered physician provided**

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**The BBC's Malcolm Brabant**  
"The Swedish government was driven to the decision by a Paediatrician"

## Internet links:

- Stockholm Jewish Community (on circumcisions)
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perform the ceremony because many health professionals in Sweden view circumcision as a form of mutilation.

**that person has obtained special authorization from the National Board of Health and Welfare**

In its website, the community says that making circumcision impossible to carry out in practice would make the Swedish-Jewish congregation, which is already a small minority in Sweden, feel isolated and vulnerable.

**No boy may be circumcised without an anaesthetic, which must be administered either by a registered physician or by a registered nurse**

It adds that it is in principle not the task of the Swedish non-Jewish society to educate the Jewish minority.

**The new law comes into force on 1 October**

"It is a scandal that the Riksdag [parliament], which has recently recognised the Jewish group as a national minority, shortly after introduces a restriction on Jewish life in Sweden, with unforeseeable consequences," the website said.

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