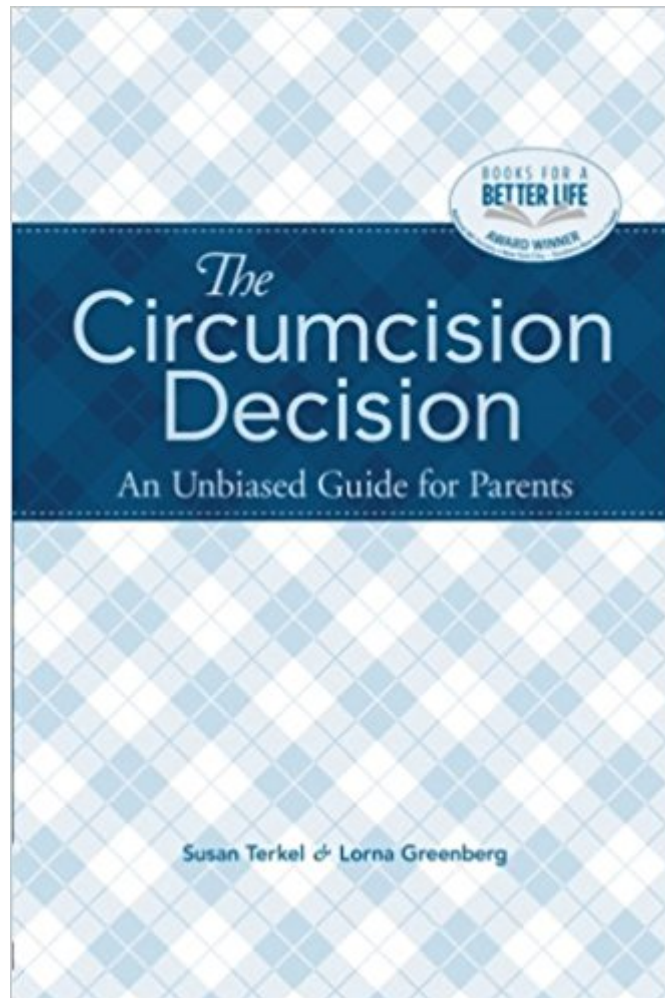




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# The Circumcision Decision: An Unbiased Guide For Parents



## Synopsis

A Truly Unbiased Guide for Parents The Circumcision Decision is the only unbiased, thoughtful exploration of the important question of whether to circumcise your son or leave his foreskin intact. With a highly readable approach and reliable information, it guides parents through the full range of issues to help them make a decision that is best for their newborn son. How This Book Is Unique It explores the benefits of both sides of the issue. The authors of most websites, blogs and books try hard to persuade you of their position. In contrast, this book presents all the issues and gives you everything you need to know to make your own informed decision whether to circumcise your son or to leave his foreskin intact. It goes beyond the decision. If you decide to circumcise, it helps you understand what you need to know about circumcisers, pain relief, protective shields, and more. If you decide to leave your son intact, it gives you valuable information for taking care of your son's foreskin. It's the best parenting book about circumcision. All the information in this book has been carefully reviewed and edited by leading experts in their field, including professors and doctors from Columbia University, Case Western Reserve, The Cleveland Clinic, Duke and the like. It also won a national award for the BEST parenting book of the year.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

WINNER!!! 17th Annual Books for a Better Life Awards. (Childcare/Parenting) The winners were announced Monday, March 11, 2013, at the annual awards ceremony in New York City, sponsored by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and hosted by TV personality Meredith Vieira. The Awards recognize self-improvement authors whose messages are aligned with the chapter's mission of

inspiring people to live their best lives."In the best tradition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, Terkel and Greenberg have provided a beautifully balanced, evidence-based resource for parents and others thinking about the whole issue of male circumcision. The authors make clear that from a purely 'health risks and benefits' perspective, it is eminently reasonable for a parent to decide either way about circumcision. And they articulate well the various non-medical issues that can arise in making this highly-charged decision for our male children." - Judy Norsigian, founder/director of *Our Bodies Ourselves*

"Outside of an often violent and condescending blogosphere, where the circumcision topic gets caught between overzealous extremist perspectives, Terkel and Greenberg provide a safe place for the hot topic to land. With grace, wisdom, and class, *The Circumcision Decision* impressively presents both sides of the story in such a balanced narrative, that some of us who have already made up our minds beforehand may now find ourselves challenged by the flip side." - Nick Shell, official blogger of *Parents.com*

"*The Circumcision Decision* takes an honest, balanced and human approach to the subject of circumcision to truly help a parent make a personal decision. It covers all the issues, weights all the facts and even discusses all a parent's doubts. It is by far the best treatment of the subject I have seen yet." - Rev. Ted McIlvenna, Ph.D., president, Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality

"This book is an excellent resource for parents and health care providers to open the circumcision discussion." - Melissa Hines Bock, FNP, nurse practitioner and childbirth educator

We wrote this book about the circumcision decision for several reasons. The main reason was that an unbiased guide for parents didn't exist! Yes, there are a number of books about circumcision. But each one tries to persuade readers. Doctors who emphasize the potential medical benefits of circumcision try to persuade readers to circumcise while psychologists and others who consider removal of a healthy foreskin from a healthy infant unnecessary or wrong, try to persuade readers to leave their son's foreskin intact. Susan, being pro-circumcision and Lorna, being anti-circumcision, provide balance and accuracy for their book, since they were always alert, and called each other out whenever they detected any bias or slant. Every sentence had to be fair, balanced, and correct!

If you are expecting to read this book and get echo-chamber-style re-affirmation of your views, you'll be disappointed. When I first started looking into this topic, I found that almost everyone with any opinion either way was primarily interested in making me feel bad for whatever decision I might make. Pro-circ and you're a morally bankrupt human being with no understanding of male anatomy and no regard for children. Anti-circ and you're a morally bankrupt human being with no

understanding of male anatomy, culture, or the spread of STDs. On and on. This book is not like that. This book will explain (almost) everything for you. It'll be laid out in rather bland and mid-to-high-level terms, but you'll have the information. You will not necessarily feel good OR bad about whatever you decide based on what you read in it. The authors go to great lengths to remain impartial and fair, and it shows, as they don't resort to piling guilt on either side of the fence. The authors seem to realize that aggressively pushing one side of an argument just turns neutral people off and doesn't help anyone make a decision; that is, they educate rather than advocate. As a result, I found it to be a refreshing and informative read, and would recommend it to any new parent of a boy. After reading this book, I feel confident in my decision to not circumcise my son and I can support my decision effectively in an argument, while understanding that others may not agree with me (for better or worse, male circumcision is still a thing). If someone is trying to push you into a particular outcome and you feel like you just don't have the right information, or the information you find feels manipulative rather than informative, then I can't recommend this book enough.

I'd probably recommend this book to any expecting mothers who are having a son. I tried to do research online before having my son and all I was left with was more questions and concerns. This book pretty much answered any questions I had, and it made me feel more comfortable in making my decision as a responsible parent.

I really valued the content and the pro/con format. It prompted invaluable conversation with my husband. I found both sides of the debate WAY too extreme/fanatic (if you do it, you're barbaric - if you don't, you're dirty, etc) and the book provided a reasonable middle view. I would also highly recommend watching a procedure or two on YouTube to familiarize yourself with the process. I felt like after watching it, and reading about it, I could justify my decision.

This book is NOT unbiased. The authors go to great lengths to defend circumcision, but devote a disproportionately small amount of effort defending leaving a child intact. The book should have been called "How to make sure you choose the best possible circumstances for circumcising your son." They claim to be unbiased, but I think what they meant is that they present their analysis of (only some) of the issues without obvious emotion or passion. Presenting an unemotional, albeit slanted, interpretation of the issue is not the same as presenting an unbiased description of the available information. They gloss over the full story or simply omit important details in many sections of the book. One of the worst parts of this

“guide” is that not a single source was cited to support the authors’ arguments. Consequently, the book amounts to an opinion piece (biased, by nature). Furthermore, the authors use some pretty bizarre, biologically flawed logic in their attempts to explain the function of the foreskin and its role in sex. Please do not make the mistake of thinking this is the only book you need to make your decision. There is a slightly redeeming part of this book, which is why I gave it 2 stars instead of 1. It is the resource list at the back. If you do buy this book (although I wouldn’t waste my money on it - I checked this out at my local library), then at least save your time, flip to the back, check out several of the information sources, and read additional books on the topic. Recognize that the authors go to great lengths defending some of the reasons people give for circumcising their babies; therefore, the book is pro-circumcision, by definition. To obtain a balanced viewpoint before making your decision, consider also reading a book devoted to defending keeping your son intact, such as “What your doctor may NOT tell you about circumcision” by Paul Fleiss, MD. Then you will know you have seen both sides of the issue, including sources of the statistics (cited in better books). Do not make the mistake of assuming that a distilled, emotionless treatment of the issue is “unbiased,” or by any stretch of the imagination a comprehensive presentation of all the facts surrounding infant circumcision. There is so much more to learn about elective infant circumcision than what is presented in this book. Do your research. Do it properly and thoroughly. Your son is counting on you to be fully informed before making this decision.

The book does compile some good information, but in the end ties itself into knots trying to justify routine circumcision of male infants. Thus you have subjective nonsense like this:

“But comparing male circumcision to female circumcision is akin to comparing an ordinary carnivore to someone who tears a limb off a living animal to eat it.” Thinking like this reflects an absurd double standard enshrined in U.S. law: any genital mutilation of female minors, even that which is by any measure less harmful than routine male circumcision, is illegal and can net the perpetrator five years in prison (18 U.S. Code § 116). Finally the authors blurt out their true feelings: “We believe infant circumcision is your private choice, not the government’s choice.” So it’s my choice to cut off a perfectly normal body part of my infant, as if he or she were mere property. What if it’s a breast or an ear? These body parts may also cause future problems. No, this is a morally untenable position. Skip this book and read the best that

the pro- and anti-circ people have to offer. Evaluate the strengths of their arguments, and watch a video of the actual surgery while you're at it.

This is not unbiased. Its a misleading and ill informed pro circumcision book.

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