



Jose C. Cortez, M.D.  
George M. Seremetis, M.D.  
Danielle D. Sweeney, M.D.  
Amanda Ramos Hodge, RN, CPNP.  
Sarah Bushner, RN, CPNP

## Care of the Uncircumcised Penis

**Anatomy:** At birth the penis consists of a cylindrical shaft with a rounded red or purple colored area at the top called the glans, although the glans may not be visible being covered by the foreskin. The normal urethral opening is located slightly below the tip of the glans. The foreskin is a double layer of skin; the outer layer is a continuation of the penile skin while the inner layer is a type of mucous membrane similar to the lips. The inner foreskin may be adhered to the glans. This is almost always true at birth. Over time, the inner foreskin and glans separate. This separation may not occur fully until puberty. The white pearly material seen under the foreskin is a collection of dead cells and some body oils. **This is not pus.**

**Hygiene:** All children should be bathed regularly. During bathing the genitals need to be washed gently with mild soap. Do not retract the foreskin beyond any area that does not easily separate. It is not necessary to cleanse the inner surface as long as it is adherent to the glans. Moreover, forceful retraction of the foreskin may cause bleeding and scar formation resulting in infections and persistent discomfort that may necessitate a circumcision. Once the foreskin retracts easily, the foreskin should be retracted and the inner surface should be cleansed whenever the child bathes.