

foreskin facts

the intact penis needs no special care or cleaning

Plain water and gentle wiping with fingertips will remove any urine or smegma (white matter) that may accumulate.

if intact, don't retract

The foreskin should NEVER be forcibly retracted! Forcibly pulling back the foreskin tears the membrane between the foreskin and the glans. It causes pain and bleeding, serves as an entry point for bacteria, and can lead to infection, adhesions, and scarring. The boy should be the first person to retract his own foreskin. No physician, other health care professional, or parent should ever forcibly retract a boy's foreskin.

normal The foreskin, or *prepuce* is a normal, functional part of the body. In boys and men, the foreskin covers the head, or *glans* of the penis; in girls and women, it covers the clitoris.

sensitive The foreskin is a double-layered, highly nerve-laden sexual organ that is an integral part of the penis.

attached The foreskin is normally and naturally attached to the head of the penis in male babies and children, much as the fingernail is attached to the nail bed. As a boy develops, and almost always by the end of puberty (18–25 years), his foreskin will separate naturally and become retractable.

protective The purpose of the foreskin is to protect the penis. In babies, the foreskin protects the glans from damage and keeps bacteria from entering the urinary tract. Throughout a man's life, it protects the glans from cold, injury, and drying.

sexual Because the foreskin has thousands of nerve endings, it enhances sexual sensations. The gliding action produced by the foreskin gives pleasure to both the intact man and his sex partner, and reduces chafing and friction.

natural All mammals are born with a foreskin. Nature knows what it's doing, and babies deserve to keep the bodies nature gives them!

