The aim of this leaflet is to clarify current information about circumcision to help you decide whether to have your son circumcised.
Circumcision is the operation to remove the foreskin, which is the flap of skin naturally covering the tip of the penis.

Why CHOOSE circumcision for your son?

Recent research suggests that:

- Circumcision may lower a boy's chances of getting a urinary tract infection, particularly in the first year of life. A number of studies have shown that circumcised infants run a risk of about one in 500 of getting a urinary tract infection, whereas the risk for boys who are not circumcised is around one in 100.
- Circumcision eliminates the risk of infections under the foreskin which may happen in infancy and later in childhood. Nevertheless, there is a small risk of inflammation of the extreme tip of a circumcised penis, particularly in infancy.
- Circumcision almost eliminates the risk of developing cancer of the penis later in life. It should be stressed, however, that this is a very rare condition with an incidence of 1 in 100,000.
- Circumcised men run a lower risk of getting sexually transmitted diseases, perhaps including AIDS, than men who are not circumcised. However, circumcision is no substitute for appropriate public health measures (such as condom use).

Why not?

Why CHOOSE NOT to have your son circumcised?

Some reasons why parents choose not to have their sons circumcised are:

- Parents may wish to preserve the natural state of their newborn child and to avoid any surgical intervention, unless it is essential.
- Any surgical procedure carries some risk, and this is also the case for circumcision. Complications are uncommon and include local infection, bleeding and, rarely, damage to the tip of the penis.
- Some people believe that removal of the foreskin may lead to less sensitivity of the tip of the penis, perhaps causing less sexual pleasure later in life.
- Circumcision can be painful for the child, both at the time of the operation and for some days after.