Reviewer's report

Title: Epidemiology of complications of male circumcision in Ibadan, Nigeria

Version: 1 Date: 30 May 2006

Reviewer: Anthony Caldamone

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

I found this to be a very interesting article, but there are some issues that need to be addressed.

1. The first is that the definition of a complication is somewhat ambiguous. Is excise skin a significant complication? I would think not and most often it is clinically insignificant and merely a concern of the parents. Sometimes it is not even a cosmetic issue, but in the parents opinion it is not perfect, therefore, they would like to have a revision. This compromised over half of their complications. Often times there is a combination of a buried penis due to subpubic fat and what appears to be excess skin. Most of the time the appearance of excess skin results from a buried penis due to subpubic fat, as the penile skin gets pushed up onto the glans and in fact when that fat pad is pushed back on the abdomen there is minimal if any excess skin. I would like to see the authors address this issue as it did not make any distinction in their paper.

2. The age that the examination was made and a complication was registered might be significant in that as the baby develops subpubic fat the appearance of excess skin is noted as well. This would be important to note.

The authors did not indicate the age at which these children were examined in order to have a complication.

3. Finally the technique of circumcision was not mentioned. I think it would be important that regardless of who does the circumcision if we have some idea of how the circumcisions were done. They have listed many complications but are these a variety of circumcision techniques? Are they all done without anesthesia? Is a Gomco clamp or some other circumcision device used or are these done in more of a free hand style?

I would strongly recommend that these issues be addressed prior to publication of this article in order to increase the validity of the study.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'