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INTACTIVISTS CALL ON OBSTETRICIANS MEETING IN NEW ORLEANS TO STOP CIRCUMCISING BABY BOYS

**The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
draws protestors to New Orleans convention.**

**Intact America calls circumcision “an unnecessary, inherently risky surgery that
violates boys’ human rights.” Press conference highlights ethical issues
surrounding nation’s most common pediatric surgery.**

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Intactivists are gathering in New Orleans this weekend to call upon members of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) to join the global medical community’s movement away from neonatal male circumcision.

[Intact America](#), the organization leading the demonstration and an 11 AM press conference on Saturday, May 4, placed an advertisement in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* and hired a mobile billboard, urging those who see it to “Tell America’s Obstetricians – No More Circumcision.” The sign includes the message “His Body, His Rights” to underscore the organization’s human rights concerns.

Approximately 70 Intactivists are expected to participate in the [demonstration](#), displaying banners, carrying placards, and handing out literature.

Georganne Chapin, founding executive director of Intact America, the country’s leading voice against neonatal male circumcision, said, “The leaders of ACOG apparently do not think their members – who, according to estimates, perform at least half of the one million circumcisions in the United States on unconsenting baby boys each year – should hear the arguments that have led medical authorities across the developed world to reject the surgery as unnecessary, inherently risky, and a violation of baby boys’ right to an intact body.”



Chapin commented that ACOG [rejected](#) her group’s request to rent space for an educational booth in the convention’s exhibition hall. ACOG’s rejection came in an email in which the group said male circumcision “is only indirectly related to women’s health and of only casual interest to members of ACOG.” Consequently, Intact America decided to communicate with ACOG using protesters.

“It is both sad and disingenuous that ACOG claims circumcision is of no interest to the very doctors who perform the surgery hundreds of thousands of times each year,” Chapin said. “It is also not surprising they have embraced the widely-discredited [Circumcision Policy Statement](#) issued August 27, 2012 by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which lauded the benefits of circumcising infants, while admitting that evidence for such benefits is lacking, acknowledging that the risks have never been adequately studied, and ignoring the ethical problems inherent in permanently removing normal genital tissue from individuals who cannot consent.”

Chapin noted further that the AAP’s 2012 report advocates for insurance companies and Medicaid to pay for circumcisions.

The AAP’s 2012 pro-circumcision report, released last summer and [endorsed by ACOG the same day](#), recently came under sharp criticism from a group of 40 international pediatricians, urologists and medical ethicists, whose article [Cultural Bias in the AAP's 2012 Technical Report and Policy Statement on Male Circumcision](#) (published in the AAP’s own journal, *Pediatrics*), claimed the AAP task force was biased in favor of circumcision before its members even began their deliberations. The article’s authors, all Europeans except for one Canadian, said the purported health benefits cited by the AAP could be achieved by far less drastic measures than the removal of healthy, functioning tissue from the genitals of baby boys.

The physicians’ critical view of circumcision position is identical to that of Intact America. “There is growing consensus... that physicians should discourage parents from circumcising their healthy infant boys,” the physicians say, “because non-therapeutic circumcision of underage boys in Western societies has no compelling health benefits, causes postoperative pain, can have serious long-term consequences, constitutes a violation of the United Nations’ Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and conflicts with the Hippocratic oath: *primum non nocere*: First, do no harm.”

“Intact America’s intent for this demonstration in New Orleans,” said Chapin, “is to make sure ACOG hears and understands the ethical quagmire they have put themselves into.”