

## Circumcision Preceded Epidermoid Cysts of the Penis in a Nigerian Ethnic Group

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### Abstract

The commonly performed circumcision of male infants has been searched with reference to the traumatic lesion called epidermoid cyst. A recent report emphasized with a 10-year-old boy its rarity in the world literature. Therefore, a series of 9 patients, which I documented between 1977 and 1996 from among an ethnic group in Nigeria, is presented. It accrued beneficially from the analysis of a histopathology data pool.

**Keywords:** Trauma; Circumcision; Epidermoid cyst; Ethnicity

### Short Communication

Circumcision is one of the most commonly performed surgical procedures [1]. What about the Ibos or Igbo, one of the main ethnic groups in Nigeria!? In this context, Basden [2] a British anthropologist, lived among them for many years. His researches showed that this group has similarities with the Hebrews. Indeed, he wrote that "Ibos" is a shortened form of "Hebrews"! Of their listed similarities, a notable one is the 8th day circumcision of the infant male.

Male epidermal inclusion cyst of the penis was reported recently by Okeke [3] as a complication which "appears to be extremely rare, and (that) an extensive search of all databases revealed no reports in the recent literature." Thereafter, he presented the case of a 10-year-old boy.

Therefore, I wish to present a series which occurred in a personal data pool in a Regional Reference Laboratory from 1977 to 1996. As a British group recommended, [4] such a pool is eminently suitable for epidemiological analysis (Table 1)

All cases satisfied the diagnostic requirements of a benign cyst lined by keratinizing epithelium and containing keratinous flakes (Figure 1).

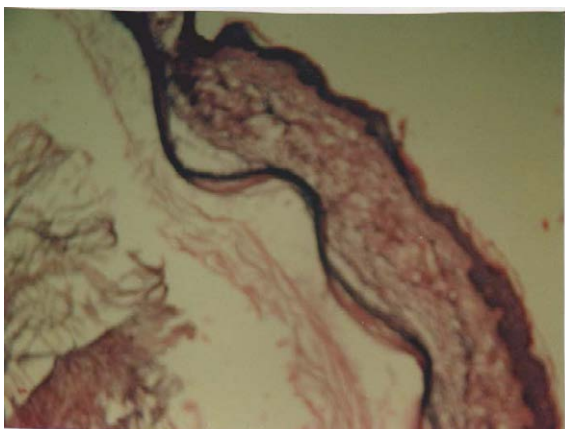
It is apparent that the patients presented from 2 years of age to 35 years (average 10 years) while the specimen's dimensions ranged from 1 cm to 4 cm (average 1.7 cm). Most of the patients came to the

University Teaching Hospital at Enugu, the cosmopolitan city of the Region, where 2 paediatrics surgeons attended to them. However, it is significant that 2 Missionary Hospitals situated in the hinterland, namely, Uburu and Afikpo, featured also in the beneficial utilization of the Regional Reference Laboratory.

Laboratory diagnosis is remarkably of interest here. This is with reference to a good result that follows male circumcision among the Igbo. Thus, as I published elsewhere, [5] squamous cell carcinoma of the *glans* penis is rare in the Igbo. Indeed, this led me to conclude thus: "International urology would benefit from careful documentation of squamous carcinoma affecting various parts of the neonatally circumcised penile skin."

### References

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**Figure 1:** Cross section of epidermoid cyst showing atrophic epidermis, subcutis, and keratinized cyst lining as well as lumen containing keratinous flakes.

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