

HipPocrates

Eugene Schoenfeld M.D.

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Dr. Eugene Schoenfeld speaking at Community Arts Auditorium, May 28, 1969 at a benefit for Open City.
Photo: Alan Gotkin.

At first I thought that this was normal but then I began to wonder. Please tell me if my condition is abnormal and, if so, what to do about it.

ANSWER: The “Goosebumps” you describe are oil glands, many of which contain hairs. They are a perfectly normal part of the adult male anatomy. If you still have doubts, why not ask your physician next time you have an annual physical examination.

QUESTION: I am a very early riser, strictly a morning man and my mate is a late sleeper. Therein lies my dilemma.

There is nothing I like better than having intercourse with her as she awakes or, more precisely, waking her up with the actual coital act. When first awakened, she is sometimes a bit irritable but quickly gets over this.

Since there is little or no foreplay involved, I cannot sustain myself long enough for her to achieve complete sexual gratification. I'm beginning to be concerned about the wisdom of this practice but I don't want to give it up because it really does turn me on.

We are not up-tight about this thing but I do feel the need to improve the situation for more mutual satisfaction. What can we do to help my mate achieve sexual gratification on short notice?

ANSWER: You could spend months or years of psychotherapy trying to determine why you wish to take your wife unawares—or adjust to the situation. If this is a frequent practice your wife isn't really surprised. But if she can't get any satisfaction, neither will you—fully.

Sounds as if you two should discuss very openly with each other your mutual needs and wants. Incidentally, my laboratory assistant says she can think of no better way to start the day.

QUESTION: For almost as long as I can remember, I have had small pimples on the lower underside of my penis. They are about the size of goose pimples.

QUESTION: If you have been circumcised, can you become uncircumcised through a skin graft?

One of my friends has been to Japan and says there it is quite common for men who have been circumcised to get skin grafts.

ANSWER: Medical opinion remains divided regarding the merits of routine circumcision.

Urologists, moyles, and other proponents cite the lack of penile cancer in Jewish men and the low incidence of cancer of the cervix in their wives. Circumcision prevents an accumulation of smegma, the cheesy substance beneath the foreskin thought to be a cancer-producing irritant. Routine circumcision also prevents tightening of the foreskin and certain penile irritations of infancy.

Opponents of routine circumcision point out that psychological effects on the infant are unknown. How does he perceive this attack on his privates? No anesthetics are used and the baby almost always cries, though many physicians say the baby feels no pain (they mean it doesn't hurt the physician). Freud neglected this area, perhaps because he was a victim of the ritual.

Claims have been made that uncircumcised males are more sensitive, but the few objective tests made of this question have shown no difference in sensitivity.

My own opinion is that routine circumcision is unnecessary if mothers learn how to care for their infant sons. The foreskin should be regularly (and gently) pulled back from the head of the penis and accumulated smegma cleansed with soap and water.

Boys should be taught this as a matter of personal hygiene. But even with scrupulous cleansing, some males will have persistent irritations and tightened foreskins requiring circumcision later in life. And circumcision in adult males requires hospitalization for several days (several months ago I printed a letter from a fellow who broke some stitches while kissing his girl goodnight).

Skin grafts to replace severed foreskins are possible. But so is the graft of an entire penis (non-functional, except for the elimination of urine).

A physician proponent of routine circumcision said of his opposition, "They are wrong to the amount of the difference." Or maybe it's much ado about little.

Dr. Schoenfeld welcomes your letters. Write to him c/o PO Box 9002, Berkeley, California, 94709.

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