

Brit Milah Information Package

Brit Milah Supply Checklist

- A small table for the circumcision materials
- Dedicated ceremonial chair for Elijah the Prophet
- A second sturdy chair for the Sandek
- Large, firm pillow
- Large towel
- Kiddush cup
- **Sweet** red wine (e.g. Kedem, Manischewitz, Carmel)
- Tallitot (prayer shawls) and kippot for all men honoured to be part of the service
- Two candles, candle holders, candles, matches or lighter
- Two boxes of 2x2 gauze pads
- Two tubes of Polysporin
- Two clean diapers
- Wipes
- Infant Tylenol
- EMLA cream (optional)

Ceremony Honours (Kibudim)

Kvater(s)

The Kvater, or Kvaters, are one or more people who are designated to carry the baby into the room to begin the Bris ceremony. A common custom is to give this honour to a childless couple, but is quite flexible, and can be given to multiple people as well.

Kisei Shel Eliyahu (optional – can be done by the Kvater)

This honoured guest will take the baby from the Kvater and place him on the designated Kisei Shel Eliyahu, the seat of Elijah the Prophet.

May-al Ha-Kisay (optional)

This honour is awarded to the guest who will take your son from the Kisei Shel Eliyahu and places him on the lap of the Sandek.

Sandek

Traditionally given to one of the grandfathers, the Sandek has the highest honour of holding the baby's legs during the Brit.

May-al HaSandak (optional)

This honoured guest takes the baby from the lap of the Sandek after the Bris is completed and hands him to the guest designated to hold baby during the naming (see Amidah LaBrachot below).

Brachot (optional)

You may designate a guest, usually someone well-versed in Hebrew, to recite the blessing over the wine and a special blessing for the Bris.

Amidah LaBrachot

This honoured guest holds the baby while the Brachot above are being recited.

Kriat Hasheim

You may designate a guest, usually someone well-versed in Hebrew, to recite the special prayer which announces the Hebrew name of your son. This can be the same person who recited the Brachot above.

Amidah L'Kriat Hasheim

This honoured guest holds the baby while the naming prayer above is being recited.

Please note: I know this is a long list of potential honours, and may seem quite complicated. I will discuss all the details with you by phone/in person and explain every step of the process both beforehand and during the Brit Milah.

Caring for Baby

Before the Brit Milah:

Baby's Health:

- Please discuss your baby's readiness for Brit Milah with his family physician or pediatrician. I will rely on their experience and physical exam to advise you of any potential issues.
- I will also go through a brief screening questionnaire when we speak on the phone prior to the Brit.

The Day Of:

- Please have your son dressed in an outfit that allows easy access, such as a sleeper or onesie.
- Try to avoid feeding him for approximately one hour before, so that he is able to soothe easily during and after the procedure.
- Placing EMLA cream or giving Tylenol prior to the Bris are options available for pain control, and I am happy to provide guidance to interested parents.

Immediately following the Brit Milah:

- After the Brit, a special gauze bandage will be put over the penis which slows bleeding, lowers risk of infection, and prevents the wound adhering to the bandage. A diaper will be placed back on, and the baby gets dressed.
- Five to ten minutes later, I will re-examine the circumcision site and do the first diaper change, going over all instructions with the parents, as well as what to expect in the coming days (which is summarized below).

Ongoing care:

Normal Healing Process:

The purpose of this brief summary is to give parents an idea of what to expect to see as the penis heals after the Brit Milah.

- There will likely be redness and mild swelling to the area immediately after the bris. Most of the swelling is likely be on the underside of the penis. As noted above, the swelling should stabilize or improve by day two. The redness will likely persist for up to two weeks.
- Many parents become concerned about a yellowish film that develops in the days after the bris. This is normal granulation tissue, which is formed as the soft tissue of the penis heals itself. It should not be removed and will fade away slowly on its own.
- If your baby is more fussy than usual, most babies will respond well to some combination of feeding, rocking and burping if needed. If this isn't enough, he can be given 40 mg of Tylenol every 4 hours as needed.

Diaper change

- Apply a new dressing over the penis at every diaper change for three days after the Brit.
- Diapers can be changed every 3-4 hours, or after every stool, whichever comes first.
- To apply the new dressing, simply gently remove the old one (it will often have fallen off already), and then place an opened 2 x 2 gauze, covered with a film of Polysporin, directly on and around the penis, and close the diaper on top.
- If the gauze is stuck to the penis, **do not** pull it off with force, as this is likely to cause bleeding. Soak the gauze in warm water first so that it peels off easily.

Cleaning:

- The penis should be cleaned by very gently running or squeezing warm water over it for the first three days after the Brit.
- From the fourth day on, your son may be bathed, making sure to clean the penis very gently.

- Should stool come in direct contact with the procedure site, simply run warm water gently over the area, in combination with gentle dabbing with a cloth until the area is clean (followed by Polysporin dressing as above).
- Do not use baby wipes directly on the penis for the first three days after the Bris.
- Do not apply barrier creams, such as Sudocrem, directly onto the penis, although they can be applied to the buttocks as usual.

Bleeding:

- A small amount of intermittent blood on the diaper, or spotting, is normal for the first day or so after the Brit Milah.
- If at any point there is active/ongoing bleeding, simply apply firm and non-stop pressure to the area with two fingers on either side of the penis, and gauze in between, for 3-4 minutes.
- If this is not effective, or if at any point there is a large amount of blood, notify myself or your baby's physician immediately.

Infection:

- Wound infection from a Brit Milah is very rare. It's part of the normal healing process to have swelling to the area for the first two to three days, as well as yellow, sticky granulation tissue.
- If there is significant redness and swelling that is increasing after two days, or there is redness and warmth to the area associated with liquidy, pus-like discharge, contact myself or your physician to address this.

Please note, I will also be available at any time following the Brit to answer any questions and address any concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact myself or your pediatrician.