

ברית מילה

Bris Milah

and other

Celebrations
for the birth of your child
according to Jewish traditions

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*No family will be denied the Mitzvah of
 Bris Milah because of inability to pay.*

Honors at the Bris

You have the opportunity to allow family and friends to participate in this mitzvah. None of these roles are obligatory, as only the Mohel and child must be present for a kosher Bris to have occurred.

Kvatar & Kvaterin: Godfather & Godmother This couple carries the baby to the Bris. Filling this role is a good omen for a childless couple to be blessed.

Chair of Elijah: This gentleman places the baby on Elijah's chair for a special blessing.

Mei Kisei le yad ha Av: This man takes the baby from the Chair of Elijah, & hands him to the Father.

Sandek: This gentleman sits and holds the baby during the Bris, and this is the greatest honor. His experience is likened to being a Priest performing the Incense offering in the Beis Ha Mikdash.

Sandek Sheni (M'Umad) : This gentleman holds the child during the blessings after the Bris, when his Hebrew name is given.

Mevorach: This gentleman is honored with reciting the blessings after the Bris, including the giving of the Hebrew name.

Child _____

Date _____

Sandek _____

Kvater _____

Kvaterin _____

Chair of Elijah _____

Mei Kisei _____

Sandek Sheni _____

Mevorach _____

General Rules

1. The Bris of a normal healthy child should be held on the 8th day after his birth, even if that day is Sabbath or Holiday, unless he was delivered by Cesarean section.
2. A Bris may not be held before the 8th day, and should only be postponed for medical reasons.
3. The slightest chance of danger requires postponement. Consult both your physician & Mohel.
4. A Bris may only be held during daytime.
5. A minyan of ten men is preferred, but not necessary.
6. The Mohel must be a religiously observant man trained both in the surgical procedure and relevant Jewish Law.
7. The Bris Ceremony will be well explained for both Jews & non Jews who may attend and help the family celebrate.

A Rabbi may officiate with the Mohel.

What to prepare for the Bris

- ✓ A bottle of sweet kosher wine
- ✓ A sturdy table with a tablecloth and two sturdy chairs
- ✓ A good light source
- ✓ A pillow and white pillowcase
- ✓ Yellow Pages Phonebook
- ✓ Disposable diapers
- ✓ 3 oz tube of vaseline
- ✓ A tube of "Neosporin Plus"
- ✓ 24 3x3 sterile gauze pads
- ✓ Optional, a new Kiddush Cup for your son to use when he grows up.

At the time of the Bris

1. We ask that the baby not be fed 45 minutes before the Bris unless necessary, so that he may be hungry and take some wine at the Bris.
2. A topical anesthetic, EMLA cream, may be used. It is NOT necessary, but if desired, it should be obtained by prescription from the pediatrician, & applied 45 minutes before the Bris.
3. In addition to practicing Bris Mila since 1993, Dr. Goldman has also practiced and taught medicine and surgery since 1981. Therefore, all instruments are fully sterilized (autoclaved) and full precautions are taken to avoid any infection being transmitted during the procedure.

After the Bris

1. With each diaper change, place a fresh gauze pad, well coated with vaseline, at the site of circumcision.
2. If you see a pink tint, do not worry. It is just urine colored by dried blood.
3. The circular dressing may be removed by gently unwinding it, after 24 hours. If it comes off sooner, do not try to replace it.
4. You may bathe the baby after 5 days.
5. Do not be concerned if there is a yellowish color where the healing is occurring, as this is normal. Do not attempt to remove this. It should resolve within a few days.

If you have any questions
 or concerns, ***please call!***

The time of the birth of a child is one at which many parents stop to reflect upon the meaning of their lives, and consider the environment in which they want to raise their children. The Jewish faith guides us in opportunities to celebrate as we thank our Creator for the gift of a new life, and to help us focus on the values and lifestyle we want to impart.

About the name

Tradition puts great importance on the name given to the child. It may be a description of the strengths we hope he or she will display, or a prayer that the child will live up to the potential expressed in the name. The Hebrew name is the one that carries great weight. Having an English name that is similar in sound or meaning to the Hebrew name can give a greater spiritual importance to the former.

It is common that the child be named after someone that the parents admire, perhaps in the hopes that the souls will be connected. Ashkenazi Jews often name after a deceased relative, or another person of greatness, while Sephardi Jews often name in honor of a living parent or relative.

In times of danger of assimilation, having a Hebrew name, especially one used by his or her family, can be a great source of strength of identity for a child. Our Rabbis teach that the maintaining of Hebrew names was one of the four good deeds that merited our redemption from Egypt. We're also told that the parents have great insight guided by Heaven in choosing this name, and should not have any outside pressures.

After the birth of a Girl

Following the birth of a girl, the name may be given at the synagogue after the reading of the Torah (on a Monday, Thursday, Shabbat, or Holiday). The father may be honored with an Aliyah, and a special prayer is said for the recovery of the mother and the health of both mother & child. The child is given her Hebrew name, which will of course be used when she is under the Chuppah, getting married. Families may share the celebration by sponsoring a Kiddush at the Synagogue.

Jews not members of a synagogue should know that many Shuls will be happy to help with the naming and join in the celebration for any and all Jews. Every Jewish family should celebrate and name their daughter at the synagogue. This demonstrates a connection to the Jewish people and can strengthen intent to raise the child with Jewish values.

After the Birth of a Boy

Following the birth of a boy, the father may attend the synagogue to receive an Aliyah. A special prayer is said for the recovery of the mother and the health of mother and child. The boy is not given his Hebrew name until the eighth day, at the time of his Bris Milah. This follows the Torah teaching that Avraham Avinu, the first Jew, had his name changed from Avram at the time of his Bris.

“Pidyon Ha Ben”

This is the Redemption of the First Born. It is done on or after the 31st day of life, and involves the parents paying the equivalent of 5 silver shekels to a Kohen (priest) to redeem their son. This is also followed by a festive meal (Seudat Mitzvah). It is done if neither parent is the child of a Kohen or Levi, if there was no previous late miscarriage, no C-Section, and if the first born is a boy. This beautiful ceremony, not commonly performed, is a Biblical commandment and a very joyous occasion.

Before the Bris

The *Shalom Zachor* is a tradition involving friends and family gathering at the home of the baby, on the Friday night after he is born. It is traditional to serve chick peas, which signify the cyclical aspect of life, and to sing songs and share Torah, as we welcome the baby into observance of his first mitzvah, Shabbat.

Vacht nach refers to the tradition of gathering at the home the night before the Bris. Children may be brought to the crib to recite the Shema, and celebrants may study passages in the Torah referring to Bris Milah, as a spiritual guarding for the baby. This vigil is omitted on Friday night, the Seder nights of Pesach, and on Yom Kippur.

The Bris

This Biblical commandment is the performance of Ritual Circumcision and its accompanying ceremony. The ritual brings the baby boy into the covenant (Bris) between G-d and the Jewish people, a permanent relationship. Done on the 8th day of life, unless there is G-d forbid a medical problem, it has been a time of great joy and celebration over the last 3300 years. It is performed by a Mohel, an expert in both the medical procedure and the religious laws of Bris Milah. A Rabbi may participate in the ceremony, which may be done at home or at a synagogue. Family members and Jewish friends may also be honored with participation in the ceremony. Our forefather Abraham accompanied his son Isaac's Bris with a festive meal (Talmud, Shabbos 130A), and we now usually do the same.

Dr. Stuart Goldman has been an active Mohel since 1993. He trained under Rabbi Haskel Wachsmann Z'L, author of *Maasef LeCol HaMachanot*, a sefer on the laws of adoption and conversion, and Rabbi Yaacov Werde. He has brought his two sons as well as several hundred Jewish boys into the Covenant between G-d & the Jewish People.



He was Gabbai at Congregation Ahavas Yisrael in Orlando for 5 years, where he served on the Boards of the Jewish Community Center & Jewish Federation. In Boca Raton he served on the Boards of both Boca Raton Synagogue and Isralight.

A podiatrist, he has practiced and taught Podiatric Medicine and Surgery in hospitals since 1981. He is Board Certified in Foot & Ankle Surgery by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery, and a Fellow of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons. With a special focus on problems of diabetic patients, Dr Goldman has been active in research on treatment for neuropathic symptoms, and has published (1997-2008) six articles and letters on foot and leg symptoms related to Diabetic Neuropathy and Spinal Stenosis in research journals of the American Podiatric Medical Association, American Diabetes Association, & British Diabetes Association, and the Journal of Family Practice. He is on staff with surgical privileges at Northwest & Sinai Hospitals, and Greater Baltimore Medical Center.

Because of time constraints from my medical practice, my practice of Milah is usually restricted to the Baltimore City and County area. In that this may interfere with the policy of not denying the Mitzvah of Milah to families unable to pay standard or even any fee, please be aware that whenever possible I will gladly perform a kosher bris at my home, or my office, for families that my schedule precludes my going out to. *Stuart Goldman*