

Meeting a new נשמה is
beneficial for one's own
נשמה.

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בני כלימים בבית מילה



The Checkup

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Here are some *mohelim* who come to check the baby before performing the *bris*. The truth is that it is usually possible to ascertain with a few questions over the phone whether everything is OK. However, frequently there are surprises, and to play it safe, it is a good idea to come and check the baby beforehand. And that is why many *mohelim* come check the baby before the *bris*.

Some parents just look at this as an opportunity to meet the *mohel*. While that is true, there are a few things the *mohel* will want to check for:

Yellow - Jaundice The *halacha* is that if a baby is yellow, the *bris* must be postponed until the yellow goes away. Medically, this yellow is called Jaundice. The *mohel* will want to see if the baby has jaundice. When a baby has a high bilirubin level, he will have a yellowish tinge. This yellowness will depend on how high the bilirubin is. Many babies have increased bilirubin levels, but if the baby has a bilirubin level of over 13-14, the *bris* will need to be postponed until the bilirubin goes down. (This varies somewhat depending on the *mohel*).

Usually, the *mohel* can tell how high the bilirubin is based on the color alone, but on occasion they will refer

you to someone who does bilirubin testing to get an exact result.

Many parents may notice that their baby looks very yellow in the face. This doesn't mean the baby is yellow. The face is not really where a *mohel* judges from, rather the stomach, legs, and backside.

Practically, if your baby is too yellow, and you would like it to go down so that the *bris* can be on time, the baby needs to drink from a bottle (only during the period where you are trying to get the yellow down). Some newborns have a hard time nursing, and they tire out from it, and have no strength to nurse anymore. At that point, even if they are given a bottle, they won't drink it because they are too tired. However, if you start the feeding with a bottle, it is easier for them, and they will eat. Eating is the best way to flush the yellow out of the system.



הרה"ח הרב ברוך דב פונרסקי (ר' בערל) שליט"א בסנדקאות

Eye Infection The *halacha* is that if the baby has an eye infection, the *bris* will have to be pushed off. The amount of time it will have to be pushed off is either until the baby heals, or until a full week after the baby heals, depending on the severity of the infection (some *mohelim* will always wait a full week.)

The *mohel* will want to see if the baby has an eye infection. When a baby has an eye infection, the inner eyelid will usually be red, and/or the eyelid will be swollen, and the baby will have difficulty opening his eye. There will also usually be a strong discharge from the eye, generally yellow or green.

Frequently, at this age, the baby will develop blockage in his tear ducts, which will create a discharge. There is no problem with doing a *bris* on a baby with a blocked tear duct, but the problem is that this can frequently develop into an eye infection. Practically, if discharge is the only symptom, the *mohel* may tell you to give him eye-drops just to make sure that it doesn't develop into an eye infection.

This being said, it is important to let the *mohel* know if you see any of the above symptoms, as early as possible.

Strength and Reflex The *mohel* will want to see if the baby has adequate strength and reflexes for a baby his age. The way this is checked is by seeing if the baby can hold up his head at all, if he has strength in his arms to be pulled up, how strong his legs are, and if the baby will grab the fingers of the *mohel*. Generally speaking, a healthy baby should be able to do these things. If not, there is concern that the baby might be ill, and the *mohel* may send you to your doctor for further consultation.

Type of Bris Although most babies are born with regular bodies, some are born with certain conditions which need a special approach for a *bris*. Without getting involved in the complications, some of these conditions are hypospadias, chordee, hydrocele, etc. These are not something that the parent would necessarily notice, and sometimes they will not even tell the parents in the hospital. So the *mohel* will want to check to see if anything is unusual.

Aside from certain complications, every baby has a different anatomy, and while many *mohelim* have a one-size-fits-all approach to a *bris*, there are some who will take a personalized and individual approach to each *bris*, depending on the specific anatomy of that baby. Therefore, such *mohelim* will want to see the baby's specific anatomy so they can plan out exactly how they would like to perform this specific *bris*.

The *mohel* should give you instructions of what to bring to the *bris*, and a list of *kibbudim* for the *bris*.

~For the full Comprehensive Parent's Guide to Bris Mila, visit www.thebrisguide.com.

Secret Segulos

R' Naftali of Ropshitz said, "it is good to go to a *Shalom Zachor* on Friday night, because meeting a new נשמה is beneficial for one's own נשמה."

The Passuk in Bereishis (5:1) "וְהָאָדָם יָסַד, תּוֹלְדוֹתָ" "אָדָם" is a reference to placing *Toras Kohanim*, otherwise known as *Sefer Vayikra*, by the baby's head in his crib, for the world exists by virtue of the breath of school children learning *Torah*, in the same way that it exists in the merit of *Korbanos* (which are detailed in *Sefer Vayikra*). ~*Sefer Chassidim*~

Some have the custom of holding the *bris* at the home of the infant's parents, in order to draw קדושה and ברכה of the *mitzvah* of *mila* down to the home. For a *mitzvah* makes a lasting impact on the place where it is performed.

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The Best Bris Not Performed – מעשה שהיה כך היה

The *sefer* Ohr Daniel tells a story of Rav Yehuda Tzadka, who was once approached on Friday afternoon by the father of a newborn baby boy. The father asked if the *rabbi* would be able to come to his home on *Shabbos* to perform his son's *bris*. The *rabbi* was already aged, and it was a very

The father had changed his mind and invited another mohel to perform the bris

long walk to this man's home, but the *rabbi* nevertheless happily agreed to perform the *mitzvah*. The next day, *Shabbos*, Rav Tzadka walked with his attendant to the man's house.

After waiting several minutes, the *rabbi* sensed that the father for some reason was trying to stall. He inquired

I intended to do the mitzvah and so I am considered as having performed it

about the delay and someone told him that it seems the father had changed his mind and invited another *mohel* to perform the *bris*. He now did not know what to tell the *rabbi*.

"No problem," Rav Tzadka said "let's perform the *mitzvah* as quick as possible."

The father then approached the *rabbi* and embarrassedly, said, "It looks like the other *mohel* forgot his

equipment. Would he be able to use yours?"

The *rabbi* responded with a warm smile and said, "of course, please take whatever you need." The *mohel* then took the equipment and performed the *bris*.

On the way back to Rav Tzadka's house, his attendant turned to him and said, "I cannot believe the way you handled the situation. On *Shabbos* morning we walked for over an hour to go this man's home, and not only did they embarrass you by inviting a different *mohel* to perform the *bris*, they had the gall to ask you for YOUR equipment. How were you able to respond so warmly?"

"I've performed thousands of *brisos* in my life" Rav Tzadka said, "but today I thanked *Hashem* for the opportunity like I never had before. *Chazal* (*Berachos* 6a) tell us that if a person tried to do a *mitzvah* but was unable to, due to extenuating circumstances, *Hashem* considers him as having performed it. Every time, I perform a *bris*, I receive a great deal of honor from the people there, and therefore it is difficult to perform the *mitzvah* solely for the sake of *Hashem*. But today, I intended to do the *mitzvah* and so I am considered as having performed it, yet I received no honor. And so, this is the best *bris* I have ever done.



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Pediatrician Approved

יש לעיין

(ג) How can one make a beracha when the ערות הקמן is exposed?

- עיין**
- שו"ע יו"ד סי' רס"ה סעי' ה'
 - שו"ע או"ח סי' עה סעי' ד'
 - ורמ"א שם
 - רא"ש ברכות פ"ג סי' נ"ב
 - והובא בב"י ובשאר פוסקים
 - ויצוין לשון הלוש "שאין קדושה בקדושת המילה המביאה לידי גלוי שכנינה"
 - משנ"ב סי' עה סעי' ד' סי"ק כד!

(ב) How does אליהו come to a bris on Shabbos?

- עיין**
- עירובין מ"ג א
 - שו"ת הת"ס ה"ו סי' צה
 - בעל לב העיברי וצ"ל בפתיחה לספרו תוס' בן יחיאל על תנדב"א זוטא
 - בס' סודי רו"י להרוקח (הלכות המלאכים)
 - דרך אמונה הל' שמיטה ויובל פ"א ה"ו ביאור ההלכה ד"ה סוקרין

(א) Where is the עמרה הנ"מ לחזור על ציצין מעכבין

- עיין**
- גמ' שבת קלז. משנה אחרון שם ורש"י ד"ה עמרה
 - בית יוסף סי' רס"ד שם דעת החכם הספרדי וש"ך רס"ד סי"ק יב ונקה"כ שם
 - הבכור שור בשו"ת רש"י שבת קלז א
 - החת"ס שו"ת יו"ד סי' רמה
 - מילה שלימה פרק א' סעי' יח-כא