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Not so circumspect about circumcision: Protesters call practice a violation of human rights

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Amid a sea of pink Tuesday, protesters clad in white and red garments hoisted signs that clearly delineated them from the Planned Parenthood advocates gathered in Monument Square.

The Great Northeast & New England Circumcision Crisis Protests swept into Portland Tuesday, one of a string of stops for the activists who will rally in the region through Oct. 5.

This is the eighth event, deemed one of a series of “14 consecutive family-friendly demonstrations against forced infant circumcision,” the group reported online.

Circumcision Crisis Protests devote attention to the cause of anyone “who believes that every child, regardless of their gender or parents’ beliefs, has the right to their intact genitals, as they’re born. Someone who believes forced genital cutting on any child violates human rights.”

Harry Guiremand, a member of the group, said the protest is moving south.

“We’re heading for Boston now,” Guiremand said. “We’re here protesting infant circumcision that’s done on false pretext. It’s injurious to boys, it’s traumatic. We know that early life trauma is related to autism. We also know that the function of the foreskin is to provide pleasure and protection to the penis, which is lost when the foreskin is destroyed. We also know that everybody has a right to their own body. So this is a healthy body part that’s being cut off without their consent.”

It was just a coincidence that Planned Parenthood was there, the activists said, noting they set the date and location a year ago.

” I was personally injured, it was a choice I would have never chosen for myself,” Guiremand said. “I had the realization when I saw a video of a circumcision and I realized how brutal and violent it was. To me, I just had this sense like why did nobody protect me. Then I realized as a grown man, that people would be asking me, why didn’t anybody protect me. And so activism was the route.”

Guiremand added, “A lot of Jews agree with us. They have the same ritual but without the cutting. Every Jewish boy has the right to choose their religion, but when somebody forces their religion on your body before you get the chance to decide what your religion is, you can’t grow that body part back. The freedom of religion for those boys. ... If people were doing this to women we’d be all up in arms about it.”

For more information, visit www.bloodstainedmen.com. Next protest is in Copley Square, Boston, Thursday, Oct. 1 from 10am-3pm.