



## Prepare for ZIRPI!

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### Questionnaire

Select the BEST answer:

1. ZIRPI is:
  - A. A town in India.
  - B. A neopet.
  - C. Zipper-Related Penile Injury.
  - D. All of the above.

Answer: D.

All are correct. However, the only one you are likely to encounter in your medical practice is C, a zipper-related penile injury. The phrase was coined by our legal colleagues, who have duly noted the annual incidence of ZIRPI of about 2,000 per year in the U.S. alone [1]. Why zipper-manufacturing companies seem to be immune from lawsuits arising from ZIRPI appears to be a source of some legal confusion, as other self-inflicted injuries, such as hot coffee spills occurring at drive-through fast food establishments, have been treated differently in the courts [2].

2. The most common cause of penile trauma in adults is:
  - A. ZIRPI.
  - B. Toilet seats.
  - C. Coitus.
  - D. Sunburn.

Answer: A.

ZIRPI is the most common cause of penile trauma in men, and second to toilet seats in boys (data from NEISS, the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, administered by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, or CPSC) [1].

3. The zipper was invented by:
  - A. Benjamin Franklin.
  - B. Adolph Zipp.
  - C. Gideon Sundback.
  - D. George Foreman.

Answer: C.

Gideon Sundback (1880-1954), a Swedish immigrant who was an electrical engineer by training, focused his analytical mind on making improvements to the “clasp locker,” a boot-lacing mechanism developed by inventor Whitcomb Judson (1846-1909), which frequently jammed. He was awarded the patent for the “separable fastener” over a hundred years ago, in 1917 – his basic design remains unchanged to this day. Judson and Sundback’s Meadville, Pa. company, Talon, Inc., was the world’s main supplier of zippers for over half a century until it was eclipsed by YKK, the Tokyo-based corporation founded by Tadao Yoshida (1908-1993) [3].

4. The term “zipper” was coined by:
  - A. Bertram Work.

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- B. Woody Hayes.
- C. Salvador Dali.
- D. Adolph Zipp.

Answer: A.

Bertram Work (1868-1927), CEO of the B.F. Goodrich company of Akron, Ohio, famously said “They’ll never sell – why don’t you call them ‘zippers?’” – and subsequently marketed his company’s zippered rubber galoshes by that name in 1923, with great success (to this day, University of Akron athletic teams are known as the Zips). The fashionistas eventually saw many advantages of zippers over buttons on clothing, and the new gadget became the rage by WWII.

- 5. In which novel are zippers brutally satirized?
  - A. **The Great Gatsby**, by F. Scott Fitzgerald.
  - B. **Brave New World**, by Aldous Huxley.
  - C. **War and Peace**, by Leo Tolstoy.
  - D. **Atlas Shrugged**, by Ayn Rand.

Answer: B. In his 1932 opus, Huxley envisioned a futuristic world set in the 26<sup>th</sup> century where the years are dated A.F. (After Ford), humans are genetically engineered to fill one of five castes, and people fasten their clothing with, of all things, zippers! [4].

- 6. The first reported case of a ZIRPI was published in:
  - A. 1897.
  - B. 1936.
  - C. 1972.
  - D. 2013.

Answer: B.

The first reported case of a ZIRPI appeared in *JAMA* in 1936 [5].

- 7. In what major motion picture does a young man suffer a ZIRPI while getting ready for the prom?
  - A. Love Story.
  - B. Grease.
  - C. Forgetting Sarah Marshall.
  - D. There’s Something About Mary.

Answer: D.

Ben Stiller gives an unforgettable performance in this hilarious scene from Twentieth Century Fox’s 1998 hit film. Ironically, one of the reasons that zipper sales “took off” was that they promoted independence in children, as kids could now dress themselves more easily than with buttons.

- 8. When presented with a patient suffering from a ZIRPI, one should first
  - A. Recommend immediate surgery.
  - B. Try to work the zipper slider off the foreskin, like a piece of cloth.
  - C. Place a catheter.



Figure 1: Entrapped penis prior to emergency circumcision (note the YKK moniker on the slider handle).



Figure 2: Status-post liberation!

- D. Liberally apply mineral oil to the foreskin, and let it soak for 10 minutes before attempting anything.

Answer: D.

In many cases, the zipper slider will release itself if enough time is given for the oil to soak in [6]. If this fails, the slider faceplate may be “popped” by inserting a small flat screwdriver from the side and rotating it 90 degrees [7]. If the patient is cooperative, the slider may also be broken with a wire cutter [8,9]. A catheter should be placed only after one is certain there is no concurrent urethral injury, and then only if the patient is in retention. Emergency circumcision may be necessary if conservative measures fail (Figure 1 and 2).

- 9. Risk factors for ZIRPI include:
  - A. Being uncircumcised or insufficiently circumcised.
  - B. Going “commando” – i.e., sans underwear.
  - C. Age <18 years.
  - D. All of the above.

Answer: D,

Although B is somewhat controversial, with some references finding no increased risk of ZIRPI in the “commando” population – hence a hot topic in ZIRPI research! [10-12].

10. Most zipper litigation and recalls involve:

- A. ZIRPI.
- B. Zippered outerwear.
- C. Bean bag chairs.
- D. B and C.

Answer: D.

The U.S. CPSC has recalled some zippered outerwear and bean bag chairs for unfortunate cases of asphyxiation (cpsc.gov/recalls), but there has never been any successful legal action related to a ZIRPI.

11. All of the following should be included in a ZIRPI emergency kit except:

- A. A small flat screwdriver.
- B. Mineral oil.
- C. A pair of pliers.
- D. A wire cutter.

Answer: C.

Gently, gently, please!

12. Zippers have been tolerated for over a century in spite of ZIRPI [13,14] because of their ability to expose the penis rapidly for:

- A. Fashion.
- B. Saving time.
- C. Micturition.
- D. Other.

Answer: Your call.

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