What is male circumcision?

Male circumcision is a one-off medical procedure.

- It removes a fold of skin that covers the head of the penis - the foreskin.
- Circumcision can be carried out at any age.

Circumcision may be performed for medical or religious reasons.

This fact sheet discusses voluntary circumcision done in a medical environment by a medical professional.

HIV risk and circumcision

- The inner foreskin contains cells that HIV targets to enter the body.
- Small tears or genital ulcers on the foreskin can increase HIV risk.
- Circumcision only protects men (not women) from acquiring HIV, reducing their risk by 60%.
- It does not reduce risk of sexual transmission of HIV onwards to a female or male partner.

Key facts about circumcision

Most circumcised men do not experience any effect on...

- sexual desire or satisfaction
- erectile function
- penetration
- pain during sex
- size of their penis.

Important to know beforehand

- Do not masturbate or have sex until 6 weeks after circumcision.
- Having unprotected sex before healing increases your risk of infection.
- Circumcised men who are living with HIV can still transmit HIV.
- Circumcision does not give 100% protection - still use condoms.
- Follow the aftercare advice given by your healthcare provider.
- Test regularly for HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
The step-by-step process

1. PRE-CIRCUMCISION CONSULTATION
2. HIV & STI TEST OFFERED
3. INFORMED CONSENT
4. APPOINTMENT BOOKED
5. MEDICAL PROCEDURE IN MEDICAL SETTING
6. POST-CIRCUMCISION CONSULTATION
7. FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS
8. REFER A FRIEND!

Female circumcision

Female circumcision is a completely different procedure to male circumcision.

- It has no health benefits.
- It causes extreme harm to women.
- It does not protect against HIV.
- It is illegal in many countries.

It must **not** be considered as an HIV prevention initiative like male circumcision.

Know your rights

You have the right to:

- refuse circumcision
- be circumcised by a medical professional
- be circumcised at any age.

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