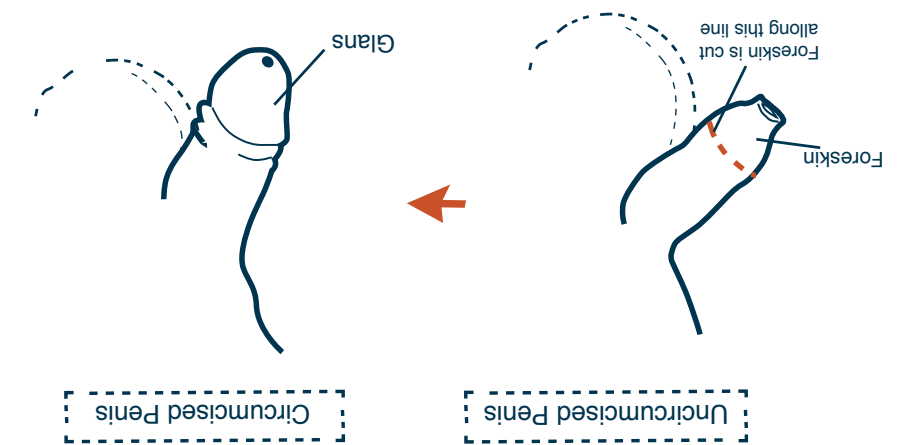


Male circumcision is practised around the world. Some men are circumcised for religious or cultural reasons. In Namibia, about 20% of the male population is circumcised. Here, circumcision is often done traditionally and by health care workers in health facilities. The government is discussing with traditional circumcisers on how to assure safety standards. This may take some time, and meanwhile only circumcisions in health facilities meet agreed safety standards.

The Namibian Government is working on making these services widely available.



Male Circumcision is the removal of the foreskin at the head of the penis.

# WHAT IS MALE CIRCUMCISION?

Circumcision reduces men's chances of getting HIV by 60 percent. For maximum protection, condoms also need to be used, correctly every time. In uncircumcised men, the inside of the foreskin is very delicate, which makes it more likely to bruise or tear during sex, thus helping the HIV virus to enter the body. Also, there are receptor cells under the foreskin (Langerhans cells). These attract HIV. Removing the foreskin removes these cells, reducing the risk of HIV infection.

Circumcised men are 60% less likely to get HIV – but still have to use condoms.

# WHAT'S THE MAIN ADVANTAGE?



# DISADVANTAGES

- After circumcision, the man has to wait 6 weeks before having sex or masturbating, so that he can heal.
- As with any surgical operation, there is a small possibility of complications from circumcision.
- The doctor will probably recommend that a patient should not work for a couple of days after circumcision in order to rest.

Also, women who have sex with circumcised men should insist on always using condoms. Female partners of circumcised men have a lower risk of cervical cancer and certain sexually transmitted infections.

Even though circumcision does not protect women from HIV, they need to know about it so they can help their sons, partners, and others to decide whether to get circumcised or not.

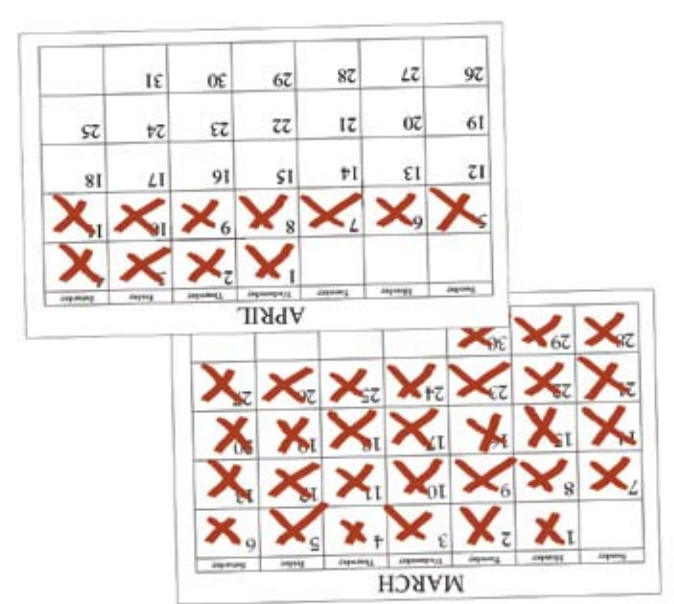
# HOW DOES MALE CIRCUMCISION AFFECT WOMEN ?

# OTHER BENEFITS ?

- Besides partial protection from HIV, circumcised men are at lower risk of getting certain other sexually transmitted infections like syphilis and gonorrhea.
- Circumcision reduces chances of infections and other medical problems with the foreskin.
- Lower risks of urinary tract infections for circumcised boys and of cancer of the penis for circumcised adults.
- Circumcised men may find it easier to maintain cleanliness of the penis.



Before circumcision, men will be offered an HIV test, examined and any genital disease will be treated. The HIV test is voluntary. However, circumcision does not offer any additional protection from HIV to people that are already infected or to their partners. Therefore, a person who tests HIV positive may not want to undergo the procedure.



Before circumcision, get tested for HIV. After circumcision, the man must wait 6 weeks before having sex or masturbating, to allow full healing.

# BEFORE & AFTER

# CIRCUMCISION AND HIV

...and always use a condom.

Circumcised men can still be infected with HIV. Circumcised men should still practise the 'ABC' of HIV protection: **A** (Abstinence), **B** (Be faithful) and **C** (Condomise). Also, men should know their status and that of their partner, by getting tested for HIV.

**IMPORTANT:** If you have any questions about circumcision and HIV prevention, please ask your nearest doctor or nurse.

# ABC & MC

# Male Circumcision

What it means for Namibia's men & women

General information leaflet



# Male Circumcision

- It **reduces men's risk** of getting **HIV**
- It reduces risk of **other sexual infections**
- Done properly, **it's safe, fast & easy**



## PLAY THE GAME RIGHT:

- A** Abstinence: Not having sex is the safest way to protect yourself
- B** Be faithful: Stick to one tested partner, and insist they stick with only you
- C** Condomise: Use condoms correctly every time
- MC** Get circumcised for additional protection

