



Reaching Impact, Saturation, and Epidemic Control (RISE)

Group Counseling Session Flip Chart

For adolescents ages 15–19 years attending voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) services (and their parents/guardians)

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General Instructions for Counselors

- Content for this flip chart is based on the **Group Counseling Session Cue Card** included in *The Guide for Counseling Adolescents at Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision Services* package (USAID, 2019).
- It is recommended that counselors use the cue cards in this package to prepare for the counseling sessions, and use the flip charts during the VMMC counseling sessions with adolescents.
- Counselors should show the **image** pages to adolescent male clients at VMMC services while referring to the **content for counselors** pages. In addition to these images, counselors may use a penis model and other models/objects (such as condoms), where appropriate.
- Counselors should adapt group counseling to suit the participants' age, level of maturity, degree of sexual experience, and whether parents/guardians are present.

Objectives of the Group Counseling Session

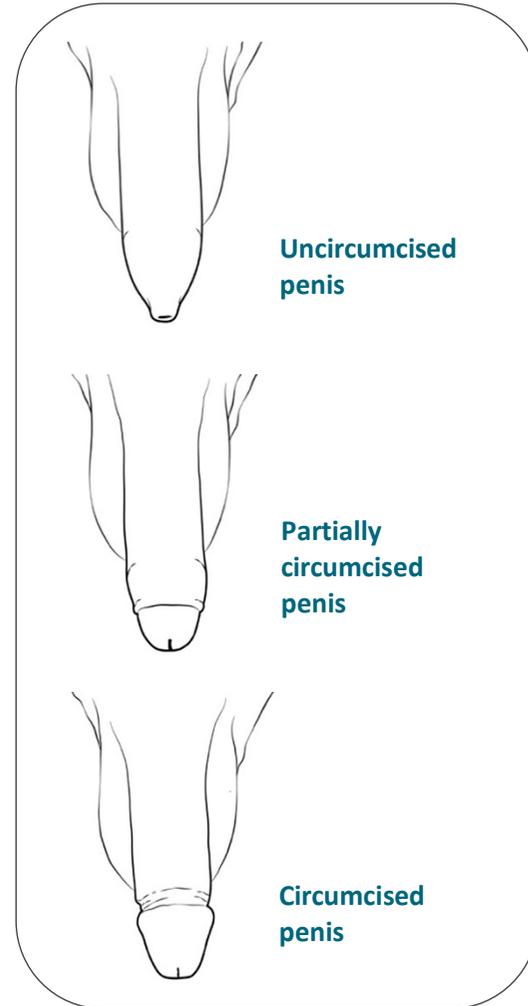
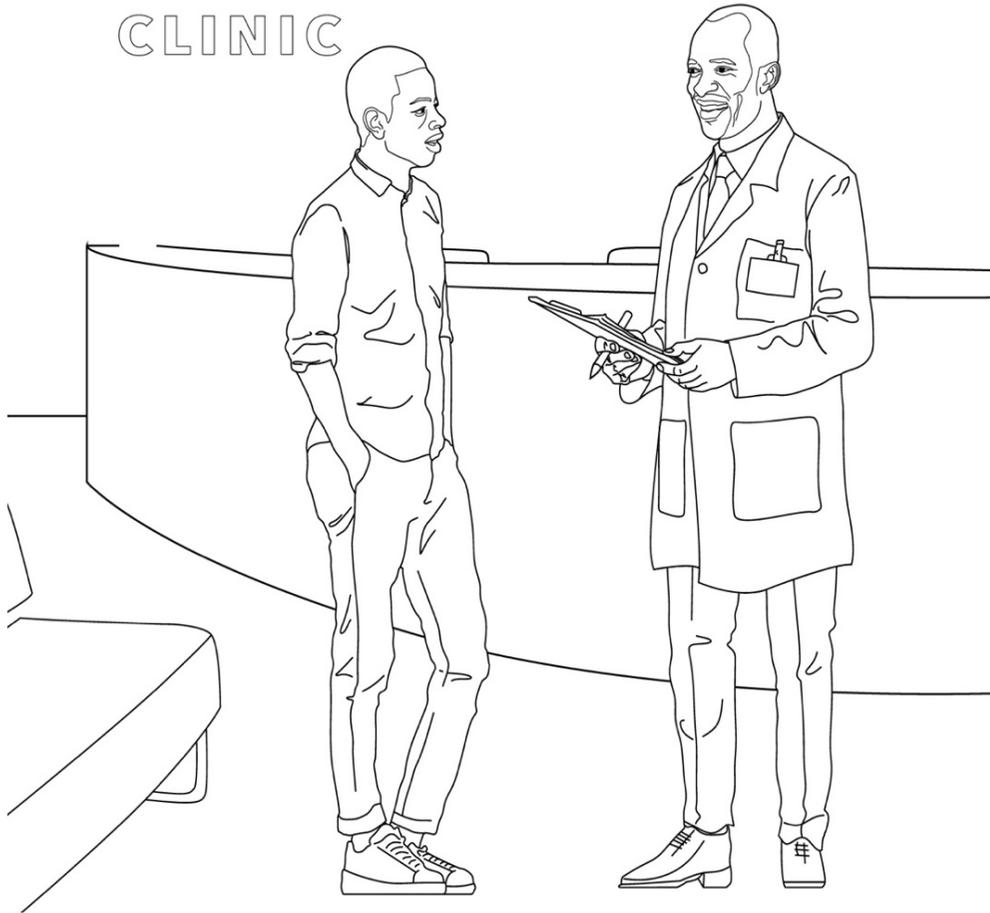
During the group counseling session, participants will learn about HIV/AIDS and VMMC services, including a step-by-step explanation of the VMMC process and best practices for taking care of their health. As a result of this session, adolescent male clients will:

- Have increased knowledge about:
 - VMMC facts and benefits
 - The VMMC service package
 - Wound care, healing period, possible side effects, and prevention of tetanus
 - HIV/AIDS transmission and risk reduction
 - HIV testing services (HTS)
 - Correct, consistent condom use
- Will be motivated and ready for more detailed discussion during individual counseling and HTS.
- Will have been offered and/or received a demonstration on correct condom use.

About VMMC

VMMC

CLINIC



About VMMC

Content for Counselors

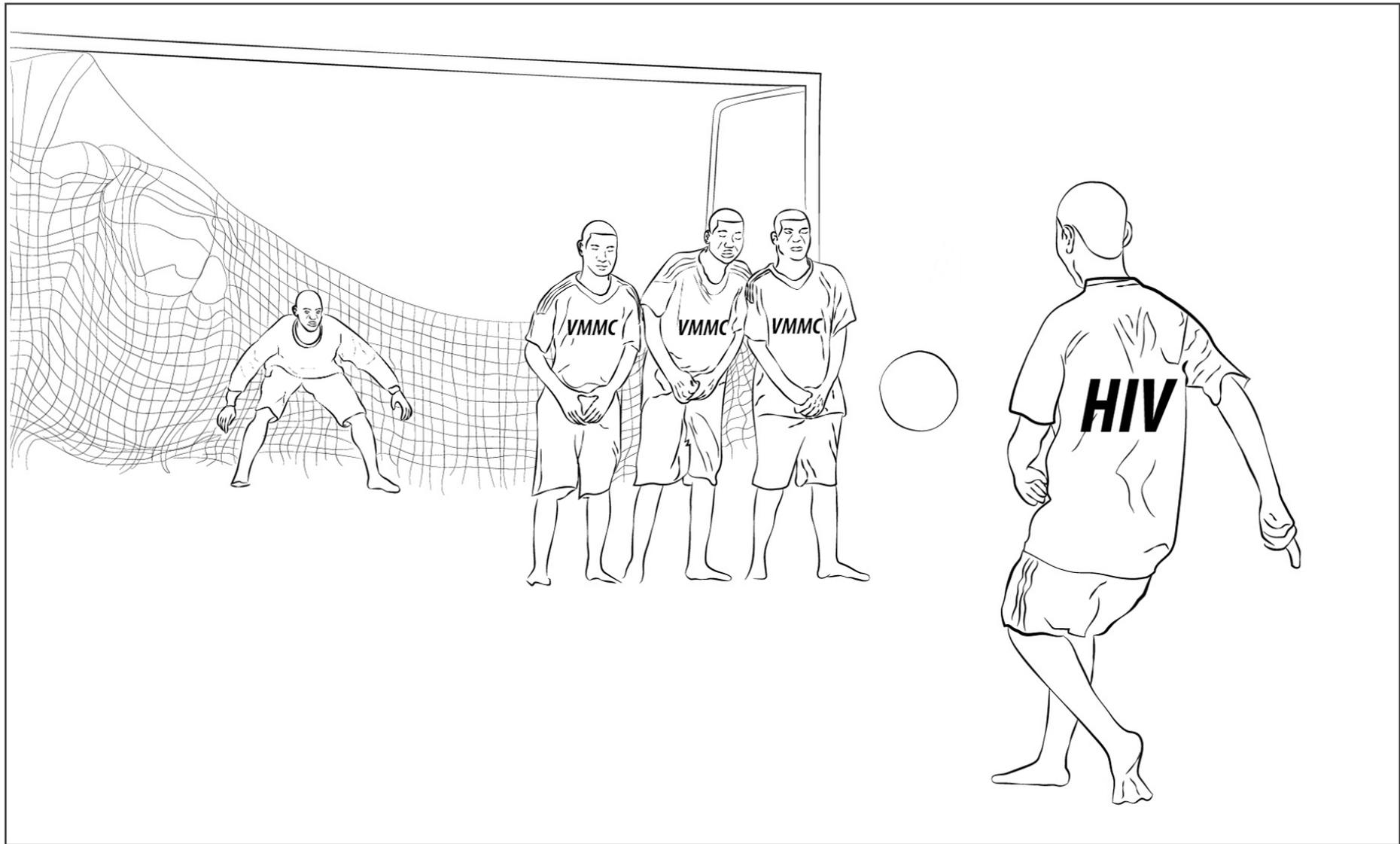
- **Voluntary medical male circumcision**, or VMMC, is the removal of the foreskin of the penis by a trained doctor or nurse.
- VMMC helps protect against HIV transmission because it removes the part of the foreskin where there are cells near the surface that allow HIV to enter the body.
- “Voluntary” means it is **your** decision to have the procedure or not.

Note: Emphasize “Your choice!” using the local language.

- VMMC is different from traditional circumcision, which does NOT provide the same protection against HIV as VMMC.

Note: Be respectful of traditional practices. In some countries, traditional circumcision means removing part of the foreskin. VMMC removes all of the foreskin. Confirm that it is acceptable locally to talk about what happens during traditional circumcision. Discuss any further details **only** if this is respectful and permissible.

Benefits of VMMC



Benefits of VMMC

Content for Counselors

- VMMC can reduce your risk of acquiring HIV by up to 60% and also protect against other sexually transmitted infections (STIs):
 - STIs are infections caused by germs spread from person to person during sex (vaginal, oral, or anal) or close intimate contact.
 - Symptoms of STIs include discharge from the penis or vagina, a burning sensation in the penis, sores on or around the genitals, and abdominal pain.
- VMMC can also reduce your risk of urinary tract infections and cancer of the penis, and reduces the risk of cervical cancer for your female partners.
- Circumcised men may find it easier to keep the penis area clean for improved hygiene.
- Remember, VMMC **only partially** reduces the risk of acquiring HIV through sexual intercourse, so you must use condoms correctly and consistently to avoid HIV transmission after circumcision.

Note: You may wish to give the definition of sexual intercourse NOW or WAIT UNTIL THE INDIVIDUAL SESSION.

Sexual intercourse is when a man inserts his penis into his partner's vagina or anus. It can also refer to oral intercourse. Oral intercourse is when one partner puts their mouth or tongue on their partner's penis or vagina.

VMMC Risks

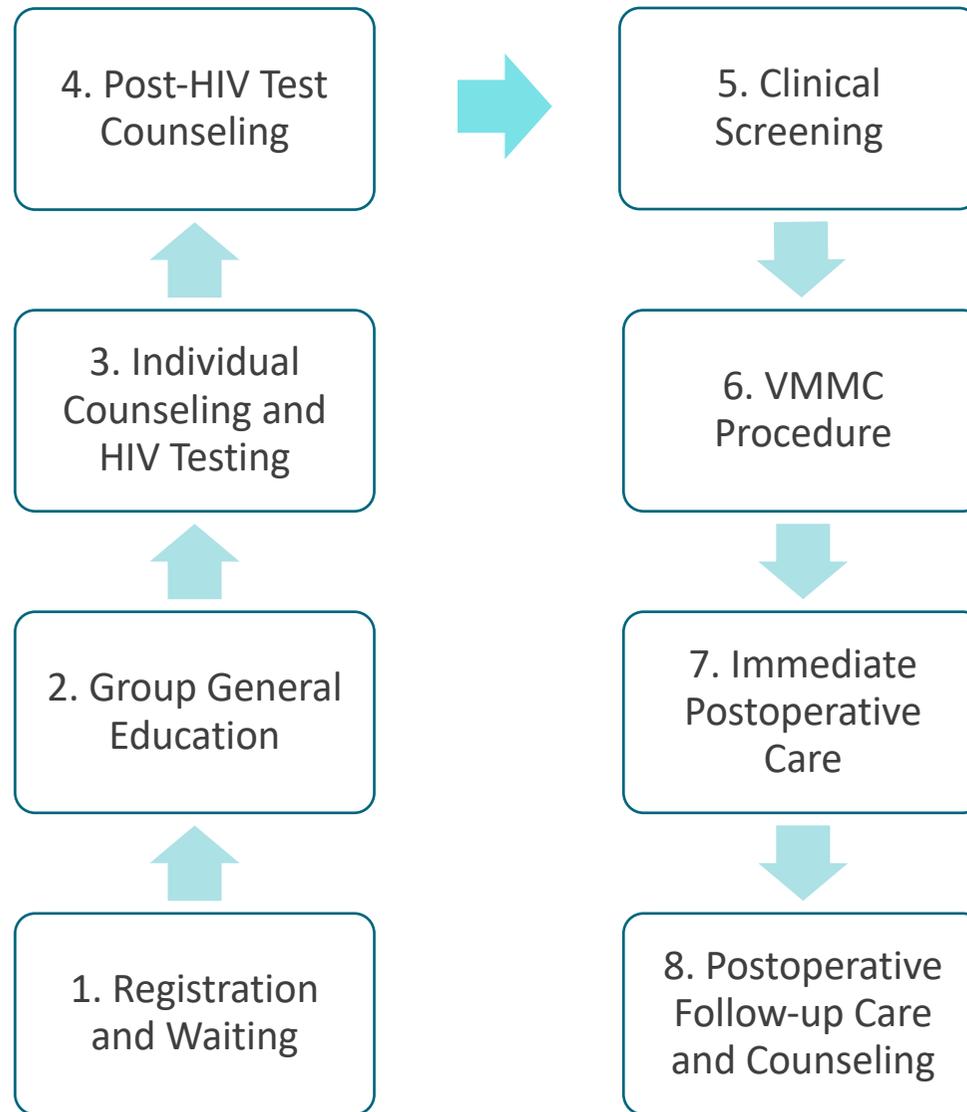


VMMC Risks

Content for Counselors

- There are some risks with VMMC. Complications, or “adverse events,” are rare, but you must not ignore them.
- Tetanus is one possible adverse event. It is a serious bacterial infection that can affect the brain and nervous system and can lead to severe muscle spasms, serious breathing difficulties, and death.
- The best way to avoid adverse events is to follow wound care instructions and keep the wound clean.
- We will talk more about adverse events and how to prevent them after the circumcision.

The VMMC Process



The VMMC Process

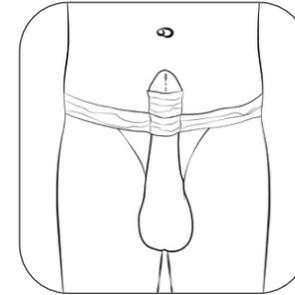
Content for Counselors

The VMMC process has eight steps:

1. **Registration and waiting:** We collect your contact information and signed consent form. If you are over the legal age of majority, you may sign; otherwise, your parent or guardian must sign.
2. **Group general education:** A counselor provides general information about VMMC and HIV/AIDS in a group setting (this session).
3. **Individual counseling and HIV testing:** You meet individually with a counselor, where you can ask questions in private and are offered voluntary HIV testing.
4. **Post-HIV test counseling:** If you choose to be tested for HIV, the counselor will discuss the results with you (and your parent or guardian if you are under the legal age of majority).
5. **Clinical screening:** We make sure you are in good health for VMMC.
6. **VMMC procedure:** A doctor or nurse performs the procedure.
7. **Immediate postoperative care:** We check that the circumcision went well and give you information about how to take care of the wound and painkillers to manage any pain.
8. **Postoperative follow-up care and counseling:** You will return for two follow-up visits, when we will remove the bandages and check that the wound is healing properly.

Remind the group: Please feel free to ask any questions you have about VMMC or other topics important for maintaining good health. Please don't be shy! I am here to answer your questions.

Follow-Up Care and the Healing Process



Follow-Up Care and the Healing Process

Content for Counselors

- You will need to return to the clinic for **two** follow-up visits—two and seven days after the VMMC.
- These visits are **critical** to ensure proper wound care and healing!
- After the circumcision, the doctor will provide you with pain medication to take home, and instructions on wound care
- To ensure proper healing, you must also abstain from masturbation and sexual intercourse for six weeks after the VMMC.
- You must also keep the wound dry.
- To prevent infection, do NOT put any herbs, cow dung, or any other substances on the wound!

Note: You may wish to provide the definition of masturbation below **NOW** or **WAIT UNTIL THE INDIVIDUAL SESSION**.

Masturbation is when people touch their own bodies for sexual pleasure. For males, this may involve stroking or rubbing the penis when it is erect.

Basic Information about HIV/AIDS



AIDS
AIDS RELATED DISEASES

HIV

ARVs can prevent HIV from developing into AIDS.

People who are HIV-positive must start treatment as soon as possible.

Basic Information about HIV/AIDS

Content for Counselors

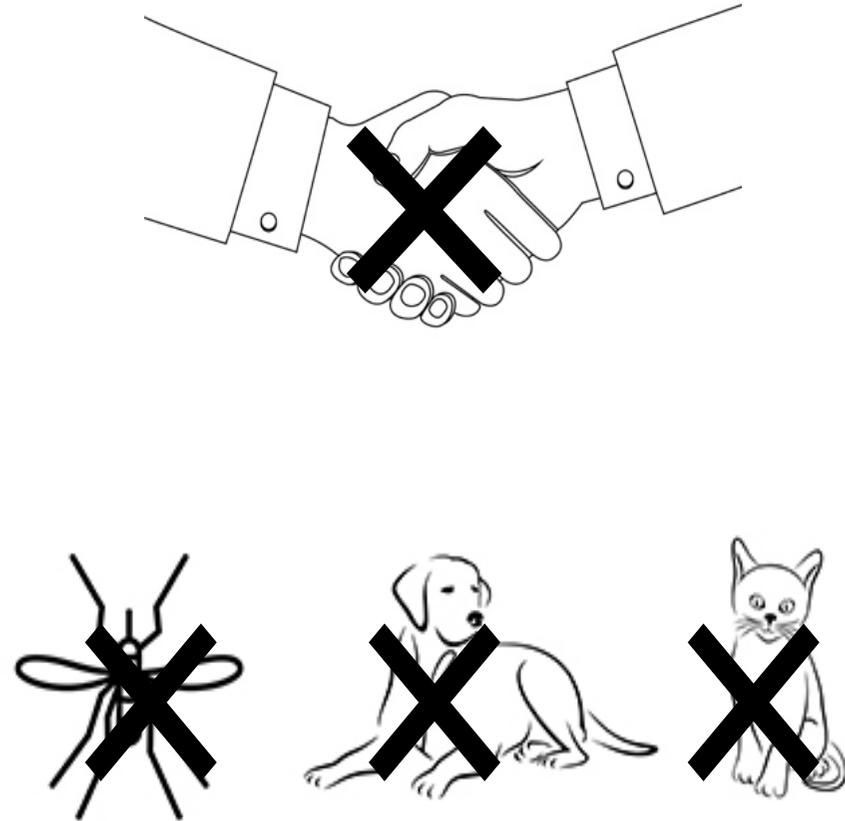
- HIV affects a person's immune system, which helps the body fight germs that cause diseases.
- AIDS is a disease that severely weakens the immune system and leads to serious infections and health problems. AIDS develops in people who have been living with HIV, usually for many years.
- Medicines called "antiretroviral drugs" or "ARVs" can help prevent HIV from developing into AIDS.
- People who are HIV-positive must start treatment for HIV as soon as possible to prevent the virus from spreading through their body.
- People who are HIV-positive can live long, healthy lives by taking ARVs and getting regular checkups with a doctor or nurse.
- A person living with HIV can be and look healthy but still transmit HIV to others if they are not taking ARVs.

HIV Transmission

HIV can be transmitted.



HIV cannot be transmitted.



HIV Transmission

Content for Counselors

HIV is transmitted by:

- Unprotected sex or sex without a condom with an HIV-positive person or a person of unknown HIV status
- Blood (through contaminated injection equipment, open sores/wounds on or around the penis/genitals, or infected blood transfusions)
- A pregnant woman living with HIV to her baby in her womb, during delivery, or through her breast milk

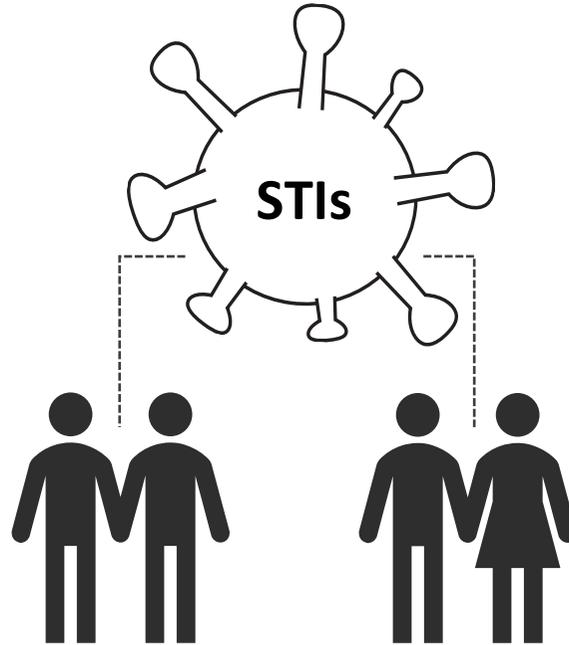
HIV **CANNOT** be transmitted by:

- Shaking hands or hugging
- Air or water
- Saliva, tears, or closed-mouth kissing
- Insects (including mosquitoes) or pets
- Sharing toilets, food, or drinks

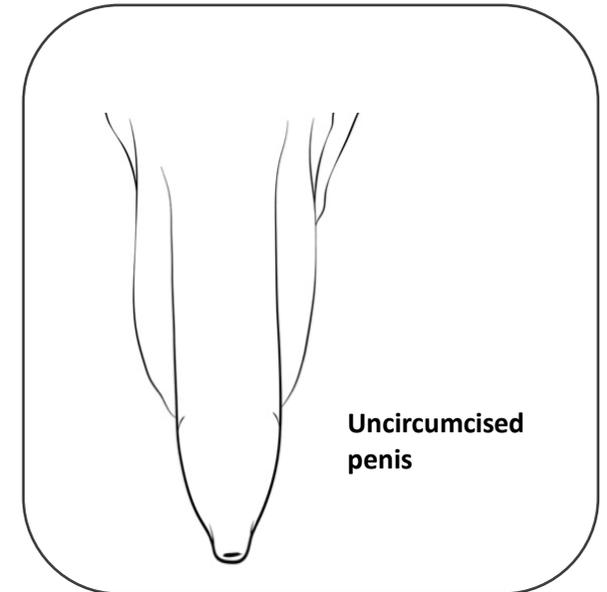
Known Risk Factors for HIV



Multiple sexual partners



Sexually transmitted infections



**Uncircumcised
penis**

Not circumcised

Known Risk Factors for HIV

Content for Counselors

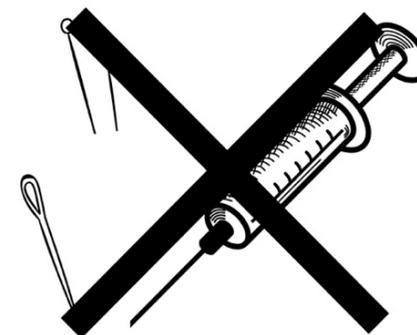
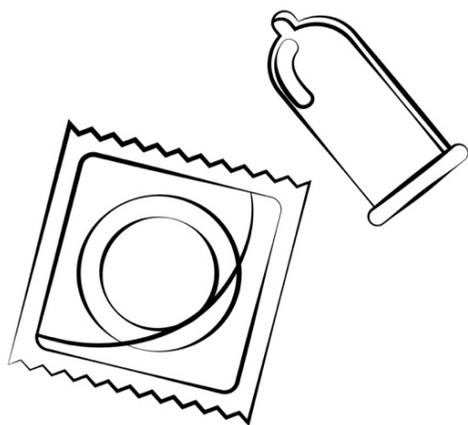
You put yourself at greater risk of HIV by:

- Having sex without a condom
- Having more than one sexual partner
- Sharing syringes, needles, or other sharp objects, such as injecting drugs with used/unclean needles

You are also more at risk if

- You have other STIs, which makes it easier to become infected with HIV.
- You are not circumcised. Remember: VMMC provides partial protection against HIV.

How to Prevent HIV Infection



Use condoms correctly and consistently when having sex.

Avoid having many sexual partners at the same time.

Avoid sharing syringes, needles, or other sharp objects that could be contaminated with HIV.

How to Prevent HIV Infection

Content for Counselors

To prevent HIV from entering your body, be sure to:

- Use condoms correctly and consistently when having sex. Condom use can also help prevent unplanned pregnancies and STIs.
- Avoid having many sexual partners at the same time.
- Avoid sharing syringes, needles, or other sharp objects that could be contaminated with HIV.

Voluntary HIV Testing



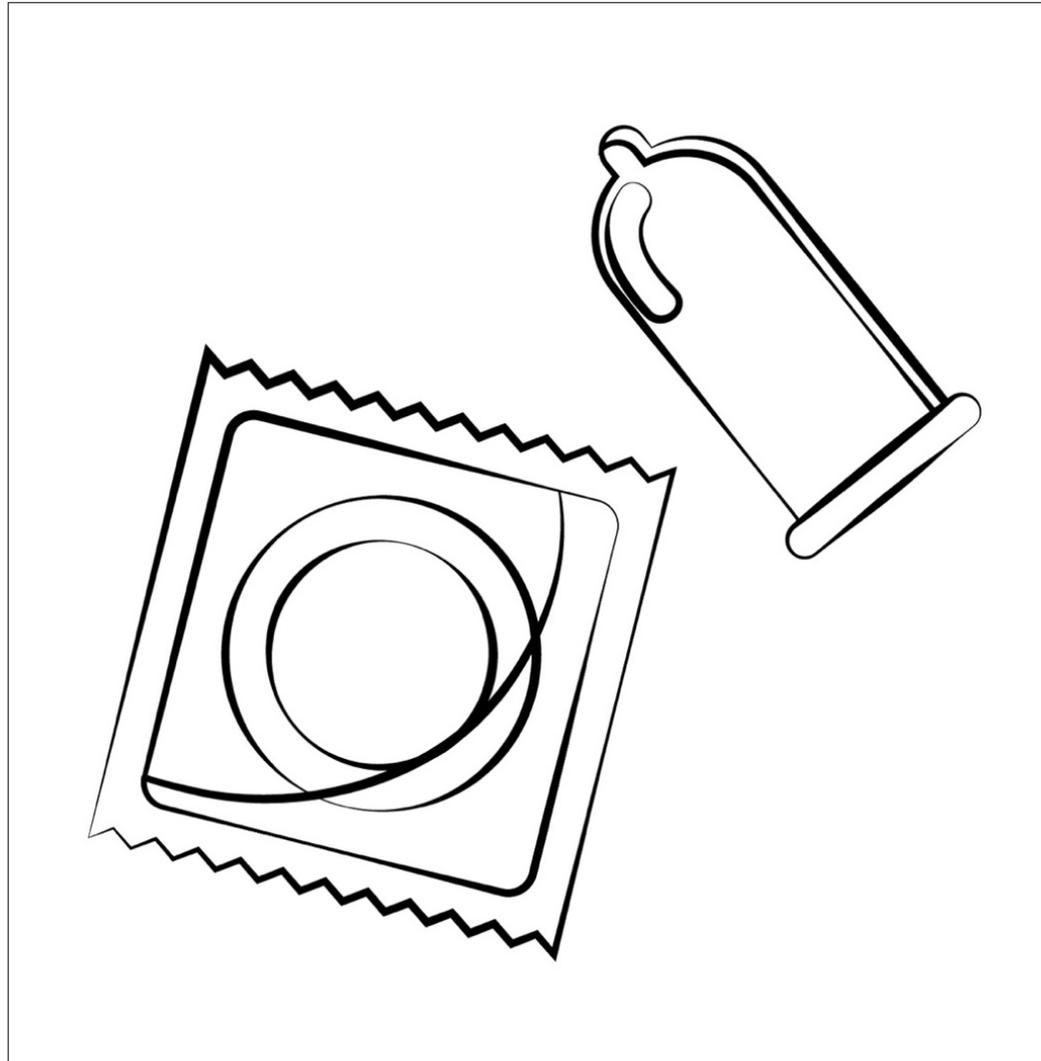
Voluntary HIV Testing

Content for Counselors

- It is important to be tested for HIV because you may be HIV-positive and not know it if you have not been tested for HIV recently and have been exposed to HIV.
- After this group counseling session, you will be offered a voluntary HIV test. **Voluntary** means you are free to choose to get tested or not.
- The test and counseling are also **confidential**. This means that everything you talk about with the counselor will be kept private, between you and the counselor.

Note: Emphasize that HIV testing and counseling are voluntary and confidential. Remind session participants that HIV testing is **"Your choice!"**

Discussion and Condom Demonstration



Discussion and Condom Demonstration

Content for Counselors

Before we end this session, **for those who are interested**, I will give a condom demonstration and discuss relevant information about sex.

- The condom demonstration is NOT meant to encourage you to start having sex. Rather, the purpose is to build your awareness and skills so that when you are ready to have sex, you will know how to use a condom and understand why it is important.
- The demonstration is optional. If you do not want to see it, you may step outside to the waiting area.

Note: Allow participants to leave the room if they choose. Then ask: May I proceed with the discussion and condom demonstration?

- Before the condom demonstration, we need to talk about sex:
- Sex, sexual activity, and physical affection include hugging, kissing, touching genitals (your private parts), and sexual intercourse, which may be vaginal sex or intercourse (when a man puts his penis into a woman's vagina), anal sex (when a man puts his penis into the anus, or rectum, of his sexual partner), or oral sex (when one partner puts their mouth or tongue on their partner's penis or vagina).
- Reasons people have sex include:
 - To feel closer to or express love for their partner
 - Because they like how it feels
 - To feel more grown up
 - To have children
 - For things they need to survive, such as money or food, or for gifts
 - Because someone forces/pressures them to (this is a violation of their human rights)
- Sex is a normal part of life. Yet, adults often warn young people NOT to have sex until they are ready. Why?

Note: Allow participants to brainstorm answers. If they do not mention that (1) you can get someone pregnant or (2) you can get HIV and other STIs or diseases, bring these answers up yourself.

- These are some good reasons to wait to have sex until you feel you are ready.
- I will now conduct the condom demonstration.