

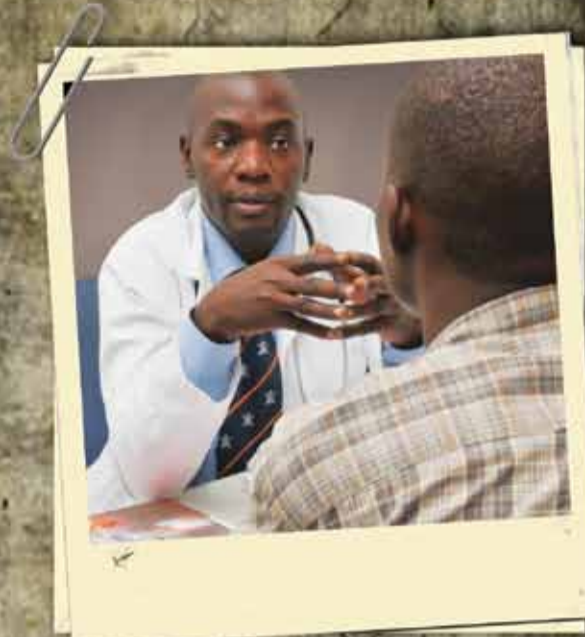
What to remember

- SMC only reduces a man's risk of getting HIV. It does not provide complete protection against HIV.
- Circumcised boys and men need to abstain from sex, stick to one partner, or use condoms to prevent HIV.
- Circumcised boys and men who are HIV positive can still transmit HIV to their sexual partners.
- Circumcision should be performed by trained health workers.

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For more information

about Safe Male Circumcision visit the nearest health facility where you see the SMC sign or call the National Health Hotline on 031 2 500 600 or 0800-200 600 OR Type SMC (leave a space) your question and send to 8198.



PRODUCED BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Understanding Safe Male Circumcision For HIV Prevention

This is a basic fact sheet on Safe Male Circumcision (SMC) for HIV prevention. It is intended for uncircumcised men to understand the role of SMC in HIV prevention.

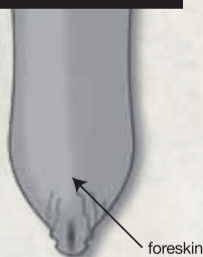
What is Safe Male Circumcision (SMC)?

Safe Male Circumcision (SMC) is a surgical process that removes all or part of the skin that covers the tip of the penis. Male circumcision should be performed in a clean place, using clean tools and trained health workers. A clean environment allows the wound to heal easily because it would not get in contact with dirty objects.

What is new about male circumcision and HIV?

Recent research conducted in Uganda, Kenya, and South Africa shows that men who have been circumcised are less likely to get HIV through sex.

Uncircumcised penis with foreskin intact

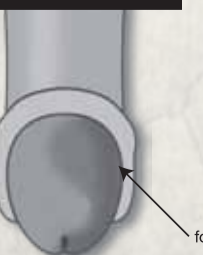


How does SMC work to reduce a man's risk of HIV infection?

There are several ways in which SMC reduces the risk of HIV.

- There is a soft layer inside the skin that covers the tip of the penis. This layer is usually wet and keeps viruses alive and active. Removing the foreskin reduces the ability of HIV to enter the man's body

Uncircumcised penis with foreskin pulled back



- SMC reduces the risk of sores caused by some sexually transmitted infections (STIs) which tend to form inside the skin of the penis. These sores make it easy for HIV to enter the body. Removing the foreskin reduces a man's risk of getting the sores and HIV.

Circumcised penis



- The soft inside part of the skin of the penis may break during sex and make it easy for HIV to enter the body. After SMC, the skin that remains at the tip of the penis becomes harder and difficult to break. This makes it hard for HIV to enter the body.

How does SMC work with ABC?

Male circumcision only gives partial protection against HIV infection. This means a circumcised man should still abstain from sex, stick to one faithful partner and use condoms.

Does SMC carry any risks?

If SMC is done properly in a clean environment, complications are rare and very minor. However, circumcision can be dangerous if the procedure is performed by untrained persons, under unclean conditions. In such a situation, circumcision can damage the penis or cause serious illness.

When can one be circumcised?

A man can be circumcised as an infant, an adolescent or as an adult. The decision to be circumcised, and at what age, is a personal choice. For guidance contact a trained health worker.

When can one resume work and sex after getting SMC?

Resuming work depends on the nature of work one does but the recommended time is after 3 days. It is also advised that men abstain from sex for at least six weeks after being circumcised. This is necessary to ensure that the wound has healed completely. When not properly healed, the wound provides a ready entry point for HIV. It is therefore advisable to return to the health centre for check-up before having sex.

What are other benefits of SMC?

- SMC decreases the risk of diseases that affect the outlet of the penis through which urine passes, and prevents the possibility of cancer of the penis.
- Sexual partners of circumcised men also face less risks of some cancers (e.g. of the cervix) and of sexually transmitted infections (e.g. Chlamydia, syphilis, cancrivids, and genital herpes).
- Many women also prefer circumcised men for sex because they believe a circumcised penis looks better, is likely to be cleaner, and possibly gives greater sexual satisfaction.

Does Uganda have a Policy for SMC?

The government of Uganda has put in place a policy and technical guidelines to regulate the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of safe male circumcision scale up activities. This is in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) recommendations that countries with high HIV prevalence should integrate safe male circumcision in the broader HIV prevention strategy as a supplementary approach.

