

Medical male circumcision is a simple surgical procedure done to remove the foreskin of the penis.

The procedure is now available in the public sector free of charge.

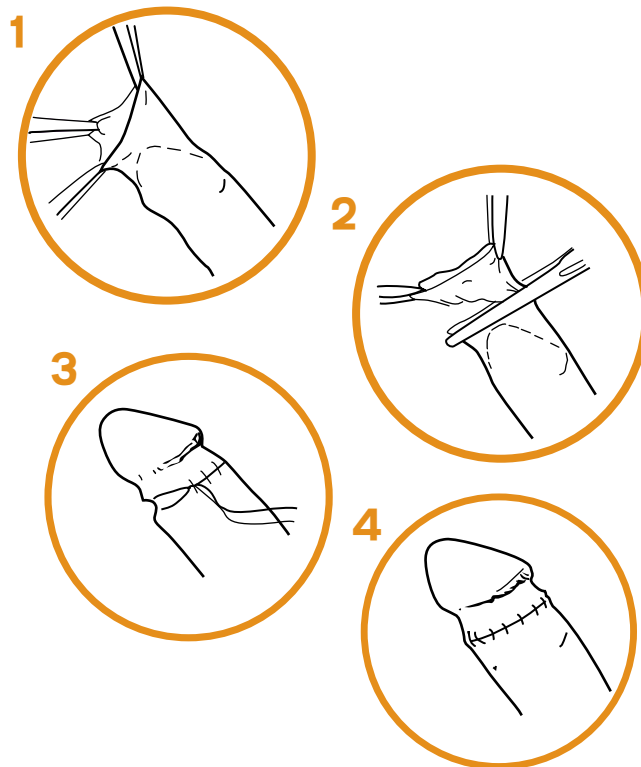
Medical circumcision reduces a heterosexual man's chances of contracting HIV and other STIs.

How is medical circumcision performed?

The most common method of performing medical circumcision in the public sector is the forceps-guided method. Less common, but also safe and effective, methods of surgical circumcision are the dorsal slit and the sleeve resection.

To perform a forceps guided circumcision pain killer is administered, then the foreskin is pulled over the head of the penis with a pair of forceps and the foreskin is then snipped using the forceps as a guide. Sutures are then done around the penis to hold the skin in place and a dressing is applied.

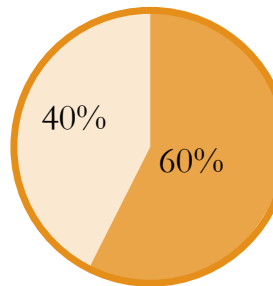
Medical male circumcision is one of the most common procedures performed worldwide and complications are very rare and usually easily resolved.



What are the health benefits of medical male circumcision?

If you are a heterosexual male, then medical male circumcision will reduce your chances of contracting HIV.

Three clinical trials, conducted in Kenya, South Africa and Uganda, showed medical circumcision reduces a man's risk of contracting HIV by 50 to 60%.



There are other significant health benefits associated with circumcision. These include reduced risk of other sexually transmitted infections such as herpes, syphilis and human papilloma virus. (The human papilloma virus increases the risk of penile cancer in men and cervical cancer in women.) The risk of getting urinary tract infections in children, phimosis (adherence of the foreskin to the penis) and balanitis (yeast infection of the penis) are also reduced.

Who can get circumcised?

Medical male circumcision is free in the public sector for infants, adolescents and adults. Circumcision is a voluntary procedure and you always have the right to refuse circumcision.

HIV positive men also have the right to be circumcised. However only HIV positive men that are currently healthy will be permitted to undergo the procedure and will need to have a CD4 count taken and be in a good state of health.

Children between the age of 6 months and 7 years should not get circumcised because the pain killers (general anesthesia) provided for the procedure is more risky for this age group.

What about condoms?

It is extremely important to keep protecting yourself and your partner through correct and consistent condom use after circumcision. The protective effect that medical circumcision has on reducing HIV transmission is only *partial* and therefore can only work as an additional preventive measure. Circumcision is not a substitute for condoms!

You will need to abstain from sex for about six weeks after circumcision. This is to allow the wound time to heal. Having sex before the wound is fully healed can increase your risk of contracting HIV.

For more information about voluntary medical male circumcision, contact your nearest TAC office:

National: 021 422 1700

Khayelitsha: 021 364 5489

Ekurhuleni: 011 873 4130

Gert Sibande: 017 811 5085

Mopani: 015 307 3381

Lusikisiki: 039 253 1951/2

Umgungundlovu: 033 394 0845



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How will circumcision affect my sex life?

There has been differing evidence on how circumcision affects sexual satisfaction. Generally, no significant decline in satisfaction is reported.

The voluntary male medical circumcision trials in Uganda and Kenya monitored sexual satisfaction – no reduction in sexual satisfaction was reported by men.

The Uganda trial also monitored the female partner's sexual satisfaction: 3% of women reported less sexual satisfaction; 57% reported no change in sexual satisfaction and 40% reported an improvement in sexual satisfaction after their partner's circumcision.

How does traditional circumcision compare to medical circumcision?

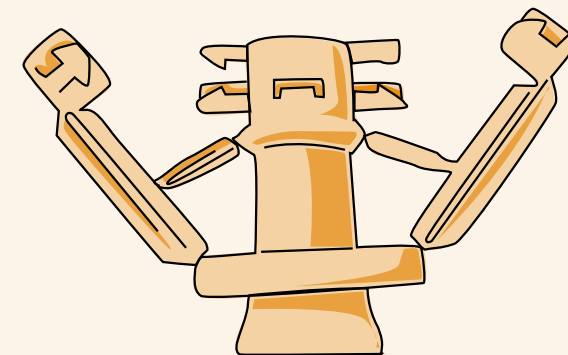
Traditional circumcision does not have the same preventative benefits as medical circumcision.

This is because traditional circumcision, unlike medical circumcision, does not always remove the entire foreskin. Men that have undergone traditional circumcision can still be candidates for medical circumcision. Speak to your healthcare worker about this.

Also, traditional circumcision is often not done safely and hygienically.



What is the Tara KLamp?



TAC warns against the use of the Tara KLamp to perform circumcisions.

The Tara KLamp is an unsafe plastic device that has in some cases been used by the Department of Health to perform circumcisions.

It is clamped onto a man's penis for 7 to 10 days until the foreskin dies and falls off with the clamp. A trial done on the Tara KLamp found the device was unsafe. The trial was stopped early because of high rates of adverse events caused by the Tara KLamp. Adverse events included swelling, sepsis, bleeding and increased pain.

If you are planning to undergo medical circumcision, ask your healthcare provider which method will be used. You can refuse the Tara KLamp and request the standard surgical method – the forceps guided method. The forceps guided method has been recognised as a safe method by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The Tara KLamp does not have WHO recognition or approval.

The Tara KLamp is only being used by the Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal. No other province is using this device due to safety concerns.



CIRCUMCISION
What you need to know