

Conditions favourable to sexual health *These strategies do not have a direct impact on HIV transmission, but include different practices and contexts that promote good sexual health and contribute to putting other strategies in place.*



BEING CIRCUMCISED

Absence of a foreskin due to surgical removal

Description

- Penile circumcision consists of surgically removing the foreskin of the penis, a piece of retractable skin covering the glans. We are not encouraging you to get circumcised, but simply informing you that being circumcised offers a certain amount of protection against HIV.
- During sex, the foreskin pulls itself back, exposing the inner foreskin, which is vulnerable to HIV infection. If there is no foreskin, it is more difficult for the virus to enter the body during sexual contact.^{1,2}

Effectiveness

- Studies among heterosexual men have shown a reduction in the risk of contracting HIV among men who are circumcised.^{1,2}
- There is currently no available data with which we can determine the role that penile circumcision may have in preventing HIV and other STIs among men who have sex with men. It appears that penile circumcision may offer some protection among men who have anal sex in the top position.¹⁻⁴

Accessibility

- The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends circumcision for adults only if they live in countries where there is²
 - an HIV epidemic among heterosexuals,
 - a prevalence of HIV higher than 15%,
 - or a low prevalence of circumcision.
- Circumcision is not recommended as an HIV prevention method in Canada.²

Acceptability

- In the *Mobilise!* survey among men who have sex with men in Montreal, 87% of respondents knew about being circumcised as a risk reduction strategy:⁸
- Advantages to being circumcised:
 - There is no need to take any specific action
- Disadvantages to being circumcised (in terms of HIV protection):
 - There is controversy among MSM about the effectiveness of this strategy
 - Does not lower the risk for the person taking the bottom position.
 - There is still a risk of contracting HIV or another STI.

References

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2. CATIE. (2012). *La circoncision masculine pour réduire le risque d'infection par le VIH*. Retrieved from <http://www.catie.ca/fr/feuilles-info/prevention/circoncision-masculine-reduire-risque-infection-vih>
3. Jin, F., Jansson, J., Law, M., Prestage, G. P., Zablotska, I., Imrie, J. C. G., . . . Wilson, D. P. (2010). Per-contact probability of HIV transmission in homosexual men in Sydney in the era of HAART. *AIDS*, 24(6), 907-913.
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5. Projet MOBILISE!. (2017). *Tri à plat des données de l'enquête MOBILISE!* (internal document).
6. Projet MOBILISE!. (2017). *Données issues des équipes citoyennes de projet MOBILISE!* (internal document).