

Circumcision for prevention of HIV: new analysis demonstrates cost-effectiveness

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A team of researchers who conducted a landmark trial in Orange Farm, South Africa, which concluded that male circumcision can substantially reduce the risk of becoming infected with HIV, have now studied the economic aspects of this approach to preventing HIV/AIDS.

Their new research, published in *PLoS Medicine*, suggests that circumcision could reduce the cost of health care in South Africa (and other sub-Saharan Countries), mainly through savings on the cost of HIV treatment.

The researchers carried out a set of calculations, using the results from their major 'Orange Farm trial', and making other assumptions based on data from elsewhere. Their mathematical model was based on a hypothetical group of 1,000 men, all of whom would be circumcised. The researchers calculated that in such a hypothetical group, the cost of providing male circumcision, per HIV infection prevented, would be around \$180. Overall, this procedure seemed to be cost-saving when the cost of HIV treatment was considered; around \$2.4 million would be saved for the 1,000 men circumcised.

The overall cost of male circumcision, per HIV infection prevented, is reasonable as compared to the costs of other strategies for prevention of HIV. There would also be implications for HIV prevention programs in other African countries.

Source: Public Library of Science

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