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Circumcision campaign in Africa touted

A CAMPAIGN to encourage African men to get circumcised to prevent infection by HIV gained a powerful boost yesterday by three new studies unveiled at the world AIDS forum in Rome.

New cases of HIV among men fell by an astonishing 76 per cent after a circumcision programme was launched in a South African township, researchers reported.

Had no circumcisions been carried out, the tally of new infections among the overall population, men and women combined, would have been 58 per cent higher.

"This study is a fantastic result for a simple intervention which costs €40 (RM170) takes 20 minutes and has to be done only once in a lifetime," said David Lewis, of the Society for Family Health in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Advocates call it "surgical vaccine", describing it as a cheap, yet effective form of prevention. — AFP