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Male circumcision boosts sexual pleasure, AIDS forum told

ROME: Male circumcision, an operation being promoted in Africa to help prevent HIV infection, boosts men's sexual pleasure, according to a study presented at the conference on AIDS medicine winding up here yesterday.

The probe is one of a panoply into the medical and psychological impacts of the fast-growing circumcision campaign.

Researchers at the University of Makerere in Uganda interviewed 316 men, average age 22, who had been circumcised between February and September 2009.

A month after the operation, 82.3 per cent said they were very satisfied with the operation and 17.7 per cent said they were satisfied.

A year after the operation, 220 of the volunteers said they were sexually active, of whom a quarter said they used condoms.

A total of 87.7 per cent said they found it easier to reach an orgasm after being circumcised, and 92.3 per cent said they experienced more sexual pleasure.

Nine out of 10 said they were happy with how their penis

looked — and more than 95.4 per cent said they believed their partner was also satisfied with its appearance.

The data was presented by researchers in a poster session at the four-day conference in Rome on scientific and medical aspects of the world's HIV/AIDS pandemic.

It updates previous findings that circumcised men found greater sexual enjoyment, thus easing one of the mental barriers to the campaign.

In 2006, trials in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa found foreskin removal more than halved men's risk of infection by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Longer-term analysis found the benefit to be even greater than thought, with a risk reduction of around 60 per cent.

After pondering the risks and benefits, health watchdogs set in motion circumcision campaigns in 13 sub-Saharan countries that have been badly hit by HIV.

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