

# Female Genital Mutilation

## What it is and how to get help



**Some of the content inside this information may be distressing.**

We recommend that a social worker, support worker, teacher, or healthcare professional reads through this information 1-to-1 with the person with a learning disability, and makes sure follow up support is available.

Please consider if it is appropriate to give this to someone to read independently and without support.

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# Women and girls have rights!



You have the right to be safe.



It is your body. No one has the right to change or damage another person's body.



You have the right to choose what happens to your body.

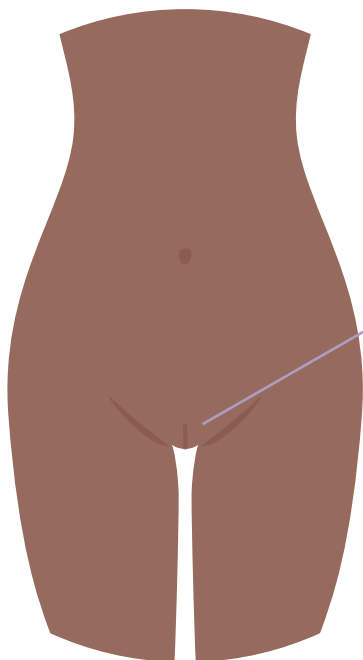
# What is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?

## FGM

Female Genital Mutilation is also known as FGM and cutting.



**It is abuse. It is wrong. It is against the law.**

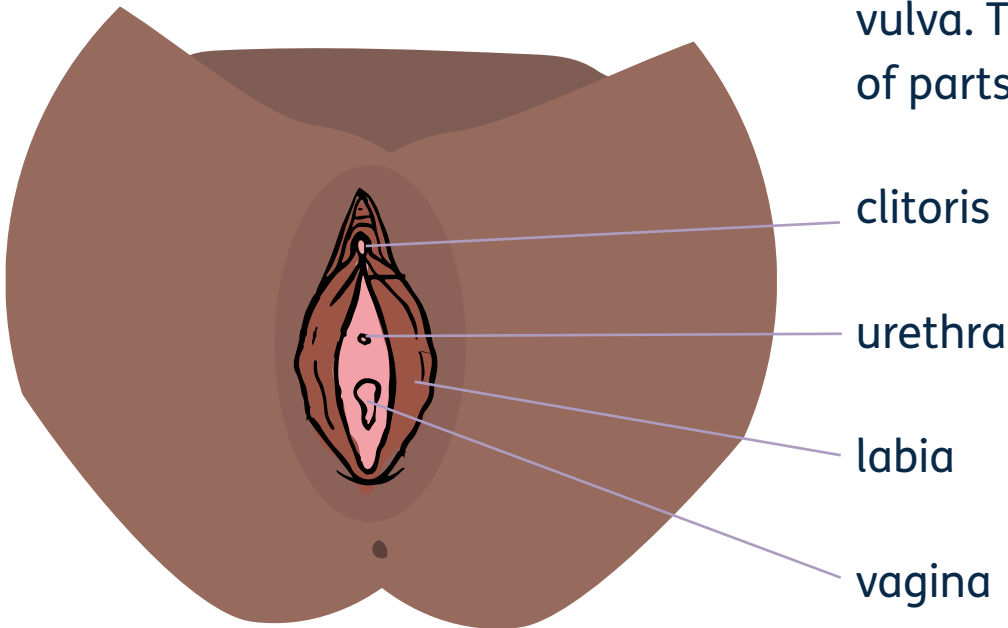


**Female** – it only happens to women and girls

**Genital** – the vulva, the private part between the legs

**Mutilation** – removing or damaging this part of the body for no medical reason

All women have a vulva. There are lots of parts to it:



In FGM different parts of a girl or woman's private parts can be cut or damaged, depending on the country and culture.



There are lots of different names for FGM. Some of the names are sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez used in other community languages

It is also known as female circumcision



**Girls and women who have FGM are victims and survivors of abuse.**

# Why does FGM happen?



Some communities and cultures believe it is the right thing to do to women and girls.



There are no good reasons for doing FGM. It just causes physical and emotional problems to the victims.



FGM is not part of any religion. But it has been happening for many years.

# Who can FGM happen to?



Girls around the age of 8.

Although it can be done shortly after birth, during childhood and through to teenagers and women.

# What can be the long term problems for survivors of FGM?



It will hurt, and the pain may last for years. It can give the girl or woman an infection, which can be serious.



Victims can have emotional problems for many years after the trauma of FGM



It can be painful to have a wee or your period.



It can stop a woman from enjoying sex.



There can be problems in the future when the woman has a baby.

# Is it legal?



**No!**

It is illegal in the UK. This means anyone who does FGM to a girl or woman has broken the law and can go to prison.



It is also against the law to make arrangements for a girl or woman to have FGM, including arranging travel to another country for FGM.



# Where does FGM happen?



It mainly happens in some African countries and some countries in the Middle East and Asia. But it can happen in the UK and any other country.



Some girls and women are taken to another country for FGM.



The girls and young women aren't usually told this is going to happen to them.



Or they may be asked to keep it a secret.

# What should I do if I think FGM was done to me?



Tell your GP or nurse.

You can ask to see a woman doctor or nurse.



You will get help and support. Ask the doctor to refer you to an expert who can help you.



If you are pregnant and think you had FGM tell the doctor or nurse as soon as possible.

# Secrets



If you have been asked to keep a secret about arrangements to have FGM for you or another girl it is Ok to break this secret.



This is so you can protect yourself or your friend from being hurt and abused.



Tell someone you trust as soon as possible.

# What should I do if I think FGM could happen to me?



You can have help to stop FGM happening to you.



But you must tell someone you trust, like your teacher, a nurse or doctor, or another adult at school or college. Or tell a friend.

Tell them as soon as you can.



If you or a friend are in danger of having FGM and need urgent help call the police on **999**.

# NSPCC

Or you can call the NSPCC FGM helpline on **0800 028 3550** 8am to 10pm. You can call even if you are over 18.

# childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME  
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

Or call ChildLine anytime  
**0800 1111**



**999** and **0800** phone numbers  
are free to call.



Or contact NESTAC  
[www.nestac.org.uk](http://www.nestac.org.uk)  
telephone number **07862279289**  
landline **01706868993**  
Monday to Friday 9am-6pm



Or contact Forward's FGM Support  
Line on **07834 168 141**  
Email: [support@forwarduk.org.uk](mailto:support@forwarduk.org.uk)  
Monday- Friday 9.30am-5.30pm  
[www.forwarduk.org.uk](http://www.forwarduk.org.uk)



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advice, please call the Foreign and  
Commonwealth Office on  
**+44 (0) 20 7008 1500**

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Community Interest Company 6916509