

What if someone I know is considering FGC?

If you are worried about yourself or a member of your community being at risk of being cut, there is help available.

If you have a life-threatening concern about a child, contact the police on 000.

If you are concerned about a child's welfare, please contact the Department of Communities' Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889 (Monday to Friday).

You can ring the police on 131 232 to put an alert on someone's passport if you think they are likely to take a child out of the country for FGC.

Crisis Care provides after-hours response to reported concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing.

[Crisis Care | Western Australian Government \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au)

1800 199 008



Further information

- Please call the Women's Health Strategy and Programs team on (08) 6458 1152 or email KEMH.WomensHealthStrategyandPrograms@health.wa.gov.au
- Visit [NETFA](#) – The National Education Toolkit - for Female Genital Mutilation Awareness.



Women and Newborn Health Service

King Edward Memorial Hospital

📍 374 Bagot Road, Subiaco WA 6008

☎ (08) 6458 2222

🌐 kemh.health.wa.gov.au

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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KHATINA

Female genital cutting (FGC)

Patient information



What is female genital cutting (FGC)?

Female genital cutting (FGC) is the removal or cutting of part or all of a girl's external genital organs for non-medical reasons.

It is usually carried out as part of a long history of traditional beliefs and practices.

What does Australian law say?

Parents of girls can feel pressure from their family and community to practise FGC. This pressure can come from within Australia or from their country of origin. Australian law comes first.

In Australia, it is illegal to practise FGC or take your daughter to another country for the procedure.

You could be jailed for up to 10 to 20 years.

How does FGC affect the health of women and girls?

All types of cutting damage and remove healthy tissue and may cause serious harm. This may include:

- Pain, bleeding and infection
- Problems passing urine
- Painful periods
- Problems passing menstrual blood
- Pain with sex
- Difficulty with having children and problems with childbirth
- Emotional and psychological pain and/or trauma.

There are no health benefits to practising FGC.

How will FGC affect my ability to have children?

You should be asked at your first antenatal appointment about FGC. If this does not happen, please tell your healthcare provider so that you can receive the best care during your pregnancy.

If you have experienced FGC your health practitioner may ask to examine you to see if your circumcision will impact the birth.

You have the right to ask your healthcare provider about your options for a safe vaginal delivery.

With some types of circumcision, it is okay to have a vaginal delivery.

Some types of circumcision may need to be surgically opened prior to the birth. This procedure is called deinfibulation. If needed, this procedure should be offered between 20-30 weeks of pregnancy or at the time of delivery. It is your choice.

Having FGM/C should not be the main reason for having a caesarean section delivery unless it is your choice.

Can I get re-stitched after childbirth?

It is illegal for any health professional or individual to re-stitch your circumcision after childbirth, but all tearing that occurs during delivery will be repaired.

Can I get surgery to open up my circumcision?

Medicare will cover the cost of opening your circumcision.

It can be done at any time of your life and not only when having a baby.

It can be done before you get married.

Psychological and emotional support is available as part of your care.

It will require a referral from your GP to King Edward Memorial Hospital (over 16 years of age) or to Perth Children's Hospital (under 16 years).

