

Follow-up care

You can book a **women's health physiotherapist appointment** to help you adjust to your newly opened vagina and assist with problems related to weeing and pooing and sexual activity.

If you would have any questions about sexual activity, contraception and family planning, speak to someone who you feel comfortable with, such as your midwife, nurse or doctor.

Resuming sexual activity

You can start having sex after 3 weeks if you are ready and feel comfortable.

- It is important to wait until you are interested and emotionally ready.
- Be aware of how your body feels and talk to your partner about how you are feeling.
- Sex might be less painful and feel looser than before your circumcision was opened.
- Sex should feel comfortable. Seek medical help if you experience painful sex or other problems. Physiotherapy can help with this.
- Lubricant (a smooth, slippery gel or liquid) can help with discomfort during sex caused by vaginal dryness, which is common after having a baby. Use a low irritant type of lubricant to keep the skin healthy.

When to seek help

It is important to come to the emergency department or visit your GP if any of the following occur:

- You are concerned about the amount of bleeding
- You can't pass urine
- You have pain from your stitches which is getting worse
- You have a fever, chills or generally feel unwell
- You have vaginal discharge with a bad odour.



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.

© North Metropolitan Health Service 2026

The information provided is for information purposes only. If you are a patient using this publication, you should seek assistance from a healthcare professional when interpreting these materials and applying them to your individual circumstances.



Government of Western Australia
North Metropolitan Health Service
Women and Newborn Health Service



Self-care after your circumcision is opened

Patient information



De-infibulation is the surgical procedure to open female circumcision or female genital cutting (FGC). This information is to assist you in the recovery after your operation and to let you know what normal recovery involves.

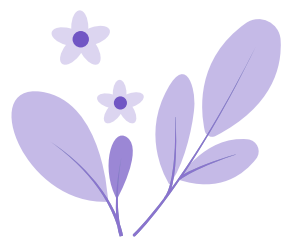
Managing discomfort

It is common to experience discomfort for a few days after your circumcision is opened.

It is important to manage pain well to support healing. Taking regular, gentle pain relief to manage discomfort is recommended. Paracetamol and anti-inflammatory medication (such as Ibuprofen) should be taken as directed. You can buy it at the supermarket or pharmacy.

Ice pads can be used the first few days to help reduce swelling and pain. A clean wet sanitary pad that has been frozen can be placed inside underwear against skin for 20 minutes at a time.

You will need to rest for three to four days to help with your recovery. Avoid heavy activity, including housework and exercise.



Changes to body sensations

When you wee, it may feel stronger and rush out faster. It might sound noisier. These are signs of a healthy bladder.

Weeing might sting or burn for the first few days; this is normal. To reduce stinging, drink urine alkalizer (such as Ural, available at the supermarket) up to four times a day. Drink 1-2 litres of fluid, mostly water, per day.



Some women feel as if everything is loose or falling out when they go to the toilet after having their circumcision opened. Although it feels concerning, don't worry, the sensations will become more familiar with time.

When your menstrual cycle starts, your period may be shorter and heavier. You may require different products (larger sanitary pads) to manage your period.

Practising self-care

It is important that the skin edges stay apart and do not join as they heal.

- To help the edges heal separately, wash the area once a day with warm water, using clean fingers to gently open the vulva, separating the skin edges and pat dry.
- Keep a jug next to the toilet so you can wash with warm water, during or after weeing.
- Change sanitary pads every 3 hours, keeping the area clean and dry to promote healing and prevent infection.
- Avoid using soap. Wash your vulva with water only.
- Keep healthy by drinking plenty of water and eating fresh food.
- Your stitches will dissolve on their own, usually within 2 weeks.
- Avoid constipation and straining on the toilet. Aim for a soft stool that is easy to pass. Stool softeners may be useful, speak to your doctor or pharmacy.
- Your physiotherapist can help if you suffer from constipation and/or have problems with weeing.

Take good care of your health and recovery by resting, asking others for help and practising good self-care, especially if you are a new mother.