

FGM and Pregnancy

All pregnant women are asked by a midwife whether they have been cut regardless of their background or where they were born.

In hospitals in the UK when a woman tells her midwife that she has had FGM or the midwife has seen it, the hospital's policy is to record this and look at whether the unborn girl may be at risk of FGM.

You may be asked questions such as;

- What are your/your families views on FGM?
- How are you going to keep your daughter safe from FGM?
- Do you feel under any pressure to perform FGM on your daughter?

It is important that you are honest when answering the questions to ensure that you receive any help you may need.

If the midwife feels you need more support to protect your daughter they may refer you to children social care

Being told a referral is being made to social care may be frightening but our aim is to protect girls from FGM. We know many families are against FGM and do not intend to continue the practice.

If you have a baby girl social care will get in touch to see if you need any extra support and to make sure you feel confident to protect your daughter from FGM.

How can I protect my daughter?

There are lots of options and professionals who are there to help you protect your daughter/s including;

- **NSPCC FGM Helpline:** 0800 028 3550. For advice and guidance around FGM.
- **Police:** 999 (Emergency) 101 (non-emergency)
- **Foreign and Commonwealth office** (if abroad): 0044 20 7008 1500.
- **FGM Protection Order** (<https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation-protection-order>)
 - This order can stop your daughter being taken out of the country (if you are worried that someone may take her) or to ensure that a person can only see your daughter/s when supervised.
 - These orders are there to help protect your daughter/s from FGM in whatever way necessary.
- **Statements against FGM** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statement-opposing-female-genital-mutilation>)
 - You can give these statements to family members to show them why you will not be performing FGM on your daughter/s.
 - They come in 11 different languages.
- **Children Social Care:** Social workers can help you develop a safety plan to keep you and your daughter/s.
- **Talk to someone safe!** If you are worried about yourself or your daughter your midwife can help. All you need to do is ask.

What Happens Next?

Information for women where FGM has been identified in pregnancy



What is Female Genital Mutilation?

Definition

“Female Genital Mutilation - also called FGM, female circumcision or cutting - is when a girl's external genitals (private parts) are damaged or cut away”

FGM can cause long and short term health consequences including:

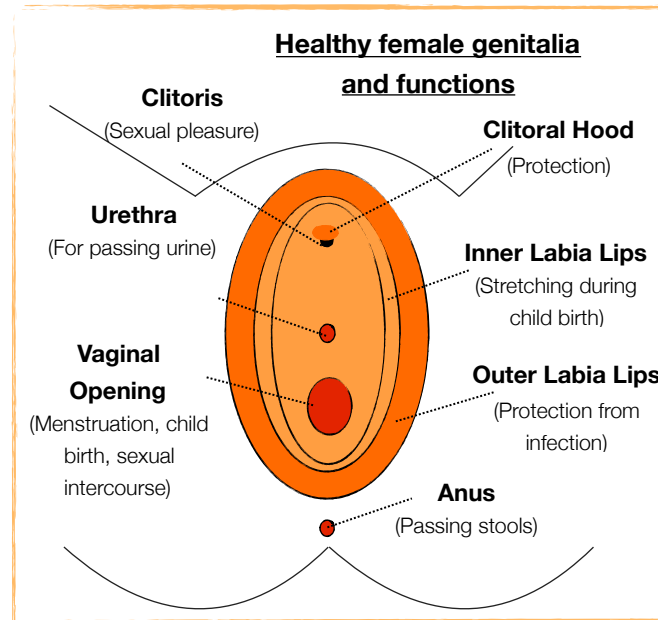
- Death
- Severe bleeding
- Nerve damage
- Infertility
- Reduce sexual pleasure
- Complications in childbirth
- Infection (HIV/Hep B)
- Depression
- Urinary infections
- Menstruation problem

FGM is not a religious requirement and has no medical benefits



Variations of FGM

There are variations of FGM that include removing or damaging the external female genitalia



You may hear professionals refer to ‘types’ of FGM.

These types are as follows:

Type 1: Damaging or removing the clitoris and/or clitoral hood.

Type 2: Damaging or removing the clitoris and the inner/outer labia lips.

Type 3: Damaging or removing the clitoris and the inner/outer labia lips and joining the skin together to sew closed.

Type 4: Any damage done to the genitalia including scraping/pricking/cutting/piercing or burning.

If you would like to know more about what type of FGM you have please **ask your midwife or obstetrician.**

FGM and the Law

FGM is illegal in the UK.

It is illegal to:

- Perform FGM on a girl
- Take a girl abroad to have FGM done
- Have FGM done on a girl in the UK
- Help arrange for a girl to have FGM
- Pressure a girl to have FGM

If you are found guilty of performing or arranging for a girl to have FGM you can be liable to **14 years in prison.**

Parents have a duty to protect their daughter from FGM. If it is found that parent/s did not protect their daughter/s they can face 7 years in prison.

Any type of FGM is considered a form of child abuse in the UK.

If you want any more information on the law and FGM you can ask your midwife or visit <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/female-genital-mutilation/>

