


Potential health consequences of Female Genital Mutilation

Created by the National FGM Centre in collaboration with Juliet Albert (Specialist FGM Midwife, Sunflower Clinic)

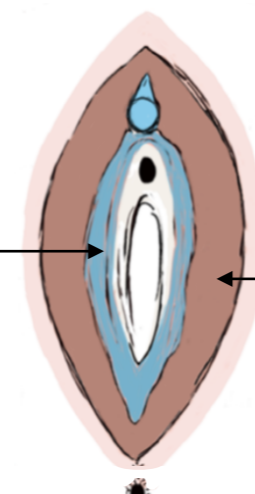
Type 1

Partial to total removal of the clitoral hood and/or clitoris



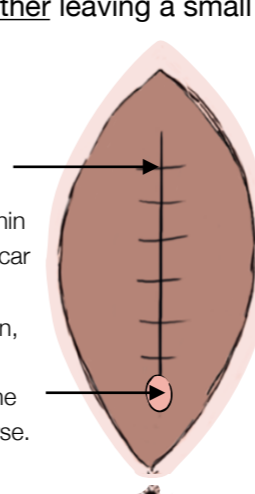
Type 2

Partial to total removal of the clitoris and inner labia and/or outer labia



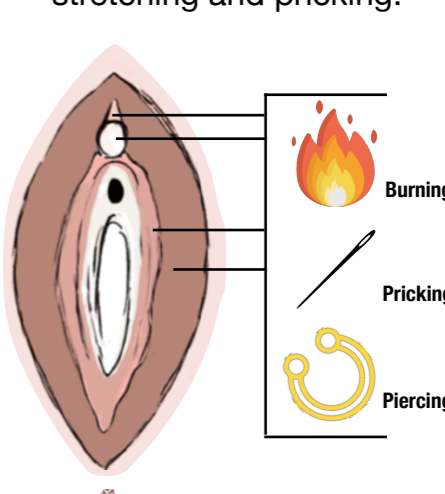
Type 3

Usually includes partial to total removal of the clitoris and inner labia and/or outer labia, with inner labia sewn/fused together leaving a small hole.



Type 4

Any other injury to the genitalia including piercing, scraping, burning, stretching and pricking.



Short Term

- Infections such as HIV, Hepatitis, Septicaemia and Tetanus.
- Pain - The clitoris contains numerous blood vessels and the most nerve endings in the female body.
- Broken limbs - If the girl was held down or restrained.
- Shock - both physical and emotional
- Excessive bleeding (haemorrhaging)
- Death

- Even a small prick, scrape, burn or piercing can damage the nerves of the genitals and cause infection.
- Stretching labia can be painful while being carried out and uncomfortable in the long term.

Long Term

- Pain during sexual intercourse due to scarring.
- It may feel tight in the clitoral area which can be very painful.
- Damage to urine hole, can cause incontinence and pain when passing urine.
- Loss of sensation which may affect sexual pleasure.

- In childbirth women are more likely to suffer tears and bleeding as scar tissue may not stretch during labour.
- Prone to urinary and thrush infections.
- Anxiety/Depression/PTSD/Flashbacks
- Cysts/Fistulas

- Sexual intercourse and cervical smears may be difficult and painful or impossible if the opening is very small.
- More likely to have pain and blood clots during menstruation
- Increased risk of pelvic inflammatory disease
- Possible infertility

Remember

A small bleed or piercing of the genitalia, may not be visible many years later however the woman may remember being held down, bleeding and being in pain.

If FGM is carried out as a baby, the woman may not remember, and may not become aware until later in life. Some women may not experience any health consequences.

Type 1

Type 2
(can include type 1 complications)

Type 3
(can include type 1 & 2 complications)