



# FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

**Information and help**

## What is female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM (also known as female genital cutting or circumcision) includes any procedure which involves the partial or total removal or injury to the external female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

### FGM and religion

FGM is not part of any religion and the practise of FGM predates Christianity and Islam.

Girls from a variety of backgrounds are affected by what is in fact a social custom.

- Neither the Bible nor the Qur'an say that FGM should be carried out
- Some people believe that it is carried out for religious reasons but this is untrue
- FGM takes place in communities across the world, including the UK

### Health problems from FGM

- Severe pain and shock, blood loss and even death
- Repeated urinary infections and difficulty going to the toilet
- Difficulty menstruating and infertility
- Psychological and relationship difficulties
- Problems in labour, putting mothers and babies' lives at risk



These health issues can affect a woman and her family for the rest of her life.

All this can be prevented - make sure you know the signs so we can prevent FGM from taking place in the first place.

## FGM and the law

**All types of FGM have been illegal in the UK since 1985.**

The Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it:

- Illegal to perform FGM in the UK
- Illegal to assist a girl to mutilate her own genitalia
- Illegal to take girls abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country
- Illegal to arrange, assist or conceal any of the above



**An offence under this act has a maximum penalty of up to 14 years in prison and/or a fine.**

Under Section 72 of The Serious Crime Act 2015 it is now an offence to fail to protect a girl who is at risk of FGM.

This means that if an act of FGM is committed against a girl under the age of 16, each person who is responsible for the girl at the time FGM occurred will be liable for prosecution.

**The penalty is up to 7 years imprisonment.**

All victims of FGM are also now entitled to lifelong anonymity, which means that the media are banned from printing any names or details that might identify the victim.

**Remember it doesn't matter if a woman or girl agrees to have FGM - it is against the law.**



**For more information about the law go to**  
<http://ow.ly/JuN530bVHYy>

## Information and help

**Useful contacts and support - there is lots of help available**

Northamptonshire Police – 101

Always call 999 in an emergency

If you think a child is at risk call the  
Child Safeguarding Team on 0300 126 1000

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board  
[www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk)

Crimestoppers – Call 0800 555 111 to report anonymously

Northants FGMCA

Eliminating FGM in Northamptonshire and supporting victims.  
Information about community activity, raising awareness of  
FGM in Northamptonshire and supporting victims and their  
families: [www.northantsfgmca.org](http://www.northantsfgmca.org)



NSPCC FGM

Free 24 hour helpline if you need  
support or would like to talk about  
your concerns: 0800 028 3550

FORWARD UK

Committed to gender equality and  
safeguarding the rights of African  
girls and women:

[www.forwarduk.org.uk](http://www.forwarduk.org.uk)

**SPOT THE  
SIGNS!**



**Share your concerns with your safeguarding team.**

Reporting of known cases of FGM is mandatory.  
Contact Northamptonshire Police on 101.

For help and advice call the MASH team on 0300 126 1000.

**IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY...**

