

## National Organisations

FORWARD- Foundation for Women's  
Health Research and Development  
Unit 4, 765-767 Harrow Road  
London, NW10 5NY  
Tel: 020 8960 4000  
Website:  
[www.forwarduk.org.uk](http://www.forwarduk.org.uk)

Afruca-Africans Unite Against Child  
Abuse  
Unit 4s, Leroy House,  
436 Essex Road  
London, N1 3QP  
Tel: 020 7704 2261  
Email: [info@afrika.org](mailto:info@afrika.org)  
Website: [www.afrika.org](http://www.afrika.org)

Black Women's Health & Family Support  
First Floor  
82 Russia Lane  
London  
E2 9LU  
Tel: 020 8980 3503  
Email:  
[bwhfs@btconnect.com](mailto:bwhfs@btconnect.com)  
website: <http://www.bwfs.org.uk>

## Local Organisations

Healthwatch Gloucestershire  
Community House  
15 College Green  
Gloucester  
GL1 2LZ

Freephone telephone number (with out  
of hours ansafone):  
0800 652 5193

Local landline number:  
01452 504989

General Email:  
[info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk)

Healthwatch was established in April  
2013 and is the consumer champion  
for health and social care in England  
giving children, young people and  
adults a powerful voice.



## Female Genital Mutilation

### What you need to know



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), is widely practiced in more than 28 African countries, parts of the Middle East, some parts of Asia and in parts of various other countries.

It is not required by any religion and is practiced by Christians, Muslims, Jews and non-believers in a wide range of communities and cultures.

### **The UK Law**

FGM is against the law in the UK under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and is a form of child abuse. It is a very serious crime and carries a penalty of 14 years in prison. It is also an offence to take a female child out of the UK for that purpose or to arrange it.

When FGM has occurred after January 2004 the Police will need to be informed.

### **What is FGM?**

There are different types of female genital mutilation depending on the area or community that practices it. The World Health Organisation describes:

#### **Type i**

Removal of part or the entire clitoris

#### **Type ii**

Refers to removal of part or all of the small labia and includes stitching or

sealing of it with or without the removal of part or the entire clitoris

#### **Type iii**

Removal of part or most of the external genitalia with stitching or narrowing of sealing of it with or without the removal of part or the entire clitoris

#### **Type iii**

Removal of part or most of the external genitalia with stitching or narrowing of the vaginal opening and sealing of the large labia. This is often called infibulations

#### **Type iv**

Refers to stretching or pulling of the clitoris and/or labia: burning of the clitoris and surrounding tissue; scraping of the tissue around the vaginal opening or cutting of the vagina. Also introduction of herbs into the vagina to cause bleeding or tighten or narrow it.

### **FGM/Circumcision is dangerous to health**

**Short term** problems include severe pain, difficulty passing urine, bleeding, infection and death.

For some types **Long term** problems include difficulty passing urine and long painful periods. For type iii there may be a long scar which can make sex and

childbirth difficult. Recurrent infections can lead to infertility.

Women may also feel angry, depressed and suffer from post traumatic stress disorder.

### **Where you can get support**

Medical help such as reversal procedure help with painful periods and difficulty passing urine and psychological support can be obtained through your GP and practice nurse.

### **Pregnancy**

If you are pregnant please speak to your midwife who will be able to advise and support you with any concerns you may have.

In addition parents and children can access these services via the health visitor and school nurse.

Young people can access help from their teachers, college staff or any health professional.