

# Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Information to help



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is 'any injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.' There are many names for FGM, including cutting, gudniin, initiation, halalays, tahir, megrez, sunna, khitan, and 'female circumcision'.

FGM has no benefits and is not supported by any religion.

## FGM and health

FGM can affect women and girls in many ways, such as:

- Infections
- Difficulty passing urine
- Difficulty in pregnancy and labour
- Sexual health problems
- Sore back
- Stomach pains or swollen stomach
- Emotional health problems (flashbacks, anxiety, depression)

## How Health Services can help

If you have been affected by FGM in any way, the health service can help you. You can speak to your doctor (GP), health visitor, midwife or you can go to a sexual health clinic. In most cases the health staff from these services will be able to give you information, advice, treatment and support. They may also refer you to other services, with your agreement. Remember, doctors and nurses will not judge you and will treat you with respect.

In Scotland you have a right to free health care whatever your immigration status. You still have that right if you have had a claim for asylum refused by the Home office.

Interpreting services will be provided if you need them. Let the service know that you need an interpreter when you are making your appointment.

If you are having a clinical examination and you would prefer a female or male examiner, please ask the health worker.

If you feel that it would help you to speak about FGM then you can ask your GP to refer you to Trauma Services or counselling, or you can contact one of the organisations listed below.

Information on NHS services in your area can be found at  
[www.nhs24.com/findlocal/](http://www.nhs24.com/findlocal/)

## FGM and the Law

FGM is a crime in Scotland and throughout the UK. It is against the law to carry out FGM in Scotland or to take a girl abroad for FGM. **It is also a crime for a person to assist or arrange the FGM of another person, even if the FGM occurs outside Scotland.** A person convicted of an offence under the Scotland FGM Act 2005 is liable to imprisonment for up to 14 years.

The Scottish Government is considering introducing FGM Protection Orders to help protect girls and women at risk of FGM: [www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/111850.aspx](http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/111850.aspx)

## Concerned about a girl at risk of FGM?

If you are concerned about a girl of any age, whether it is your daughter or any other girl who may be at risk of FGM it is important to get advice and support. You can speak to a nursery or school teacher, to a health visitor or midwife or to your doctor. Social Work can also work with you to keep girls safe from FGM. In an emergency call **999** and ask for the police, or contact Crime Stoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111** or via **www.crimestoppers-uk.org**

If you are an asylum seeker and you believe that your daughter would be at risk of FGM if you had to return to your home country, then you should speak to your lawyer.

There is a free-phone 24-hour helpline for anyone concerned about girls or women at risk of FGM. Contact: **0800 028 3550** or **fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk**

If you are abroad and require help or advice, please call the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on **+44 (0) 20 7008 1500** or the British High Commission or Embassy in the country you are visiting.

## Other organisations to help

### AMINA, THE MUSLIM WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

offers a range of support and activities and has a confidential helpline.

Citywall House 1/3, 6 Whitehall Crescent  
32 Eastwood Avenue Dundee DD1 4AU

Glasgow G41 3NS

Glasgow tel: **0141 212 8420**

Dundee tel: **01382 787 450**

Tel: **0808 801 0301** (free phone) Mon – Fri: 10am – 4pm.

Helpline email: **helpline@mwrc.org.uk**

Email: **info@mwrc.org.uk**

Web: **www.mwrc.org.uk**

**KWISA (Kenyan Women in Scotland Association)** provides support and information for African Women on FGM and other harmful traditional practices.

4th Floor, Hayweight House, 23 Lauriston Street,  
Edinburgh EH3 9DQ

Tel: **+44 (0)131 281 7347**

Email: **admin@kwisa.org**

Social: **www.facebook.com/kwisauk/**

Web: **www.kwisa.org.uk**

**SAHELIYA** is a BME women's mental health support organisation, based in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and with projects in other parts of Scotland, providing well-being services and practical help to access health services, benefits, housing, legal representation, and learning activities.

125, McDonald Road, St Rollox House, 130 Springburn  
Edinburgh, EH7 4NW Road, Glasgow, G21 1YL

Edinburgh tel: **0131 556 9302**

Glasgow tel: **0141 552 6540**

Edinburgh email: **info@saheliya.co.uk**

Glasgow email: **admin.glasgow@saheliya.co.uk**

Web: **www.saheliya.co.uk**

**SHAKTI WOMEN'S AID** provides support, advocacy and information to all black / minority ethnic women, children and young people experiencing or fleeing domestic abuse or forced marriage.

57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY

Tel: **0131 475 2399**

Email: **info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk**

Web: **www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk/contact.htm**

To find your local Women's Aid group go to

**www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk/about-us**

**WOMEN'S SUPPORT PROJECT** provide information, resources and training on FGM. Glasgow based support group for women who have had FGM, and can provide information on support available across Scotland.

Adelphi Centre, 12 Commercial Road, Glasgow G5 0PQ

Tel: **0141 418 0748**

Email: **enquiries@womenssupportproject.org.uk**

Web: **www.womenssupportproject.org.uk**

For more information on FGM and organisations to help, please go to:  
**www.fgmaware.org**

