

Useful Contacts

Centre for Development and Community Welfare
[CEDCOW]

Canning Town Enterprise and Resource Centre,
Unit 13 Canning Town Business Centre,
85 Tarling Road,
London E16 1HN
tel: **020 7366 6343**
email: **info@cedcow.org**
web: **www.cedcow.org**

Foundation for Women's Health Research and
Development **[FORWARD]**
web: **www.forward.org.uk**

Metropolitan Police
Child Abuse Investigation Command / Project Azure
tel: **020 7161 2888**

London Safeguarding Children
web: **www.londonscb.gov.uk/fgm_resources**

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
tel: **020 7008 1500**
web: **www.fco.gov.uk/fgm**

Childline
tel: **0800 11 11** (24hr free helpline for children)
web: **www.childline.org.uk**

Child Protection Helpline
tel: **0808 800 5000** (advice for adults worried about
a child)

Female Genital Mutilation and the Law

All types of female circumcision have been illegal in the UK since the 1985 Female Circumcision Prohibition Act. The new Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act (2003) updates and extends the original act.

It is now an offence to take UK nationals and those with permanent UK residency overseas for the purpose of circumcision, to aid and abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of Female Genital Mutilation (all types of circumcision). It is illegal for anyone to circumcise women or children for cultural or non-medical reasons.

A person convicted of an offence under the FGM Act 2003 is liable to imprisonment for up to 14 years.

Re-infibulation is also illegal, women will not be sewn back up after child birth.

SAY NO TO FGM IN NEWHAM



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FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/ CUTTING



Contact **CEDCOW** for

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & INFORMATION

Types of FGM

FGM Type 1

Sunna - removal of the hood of the clitoris

FGM Type 2

Excision - removal of the clitoris with partial or total excision of the labia minora

FGM Type 3

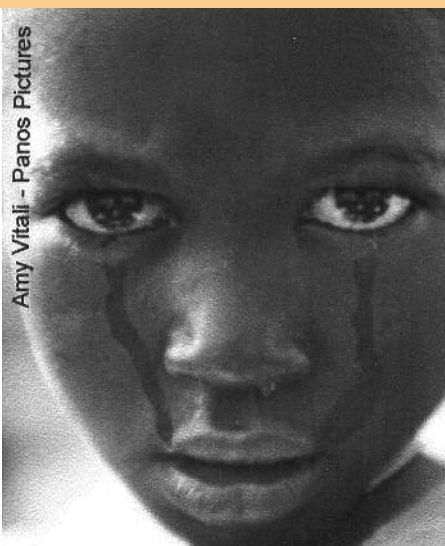
Infibulation - removal of the clitoris and labia minora with narrowing by stitching of the vaginal opening

FGM Type 4

All other types of harmful traditional practices that mutilate the female genitalia, including pricking, cutting, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterisation

Female circumcision and cutting is a strong custom and tradition. However, this custom is against the law in the UK and many other countries.

FGM (all types) is dangerous to health and can lead to death



Amy Vitail - Panos Pictures

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The Origins of FGM

FGM is most widely practised in Africa - across 28 countries - but it is prevalent in a variety of forms elsewhere as well, for example in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Some of the FGM practising communities are represented in Newham and East London including but not limited to Ethiopian, Eritrean, Sudanese, Somali, Nigerian, Sierra Leonean, Gambian, Kenyans, Cameroonian etc.

These countries have significant populations that practise a variety of religions which are often used to justify the practise. This is a mistaken belief. FGM is primarily a social practise, not a religious one.

Risk Factors

Those affected by FGM may be British Citizens born to parents from FGM practicing communities or women living in the UK who were born in countries that practice FGM. They may include immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers overseas, Students or wives of overseas students. Specific factors that may heighten a child's risk of FGM include:

- Social-economic position of the family and the level of integration within UK society.
- Older female members of the immediate family or extended family having undergone FGM.
- Prolonged absence from school.
- The intention of a long holiday usually during summer to their country of origin where FGM is prevalent.

Health Implications of FGM

FGM of all types can lead to severe physical and psychological problems. Women who have undergone FGM may suffer the following:

Short-term

Severe pain and shock;
broken limbs from being held down;
infection;
increased risk of HIV and AIDS;
urine retention;
injury to adjacent tissues;
immediate fatal haemorrhaging.

Long-term

Uterus, vaginal and pelvic infections;
cysts and neuromas;
infertility;
increased risk of fistula;
complications in pregnancy and child birth;
sexual dysfunction;
difficulties in menstruation;
considerable psycho-sexual, psychological and social consequences including trauma and depression.

An estimated 10% of victims die from short-term effects and 25% from recurrent problems.

The estimated risk of death during childbirth is doubled and the risk of stillbirth is 4 times greater for a woman who has undergone FGM.

If you have been circumcised and are affected by any of these conditions, see the Useful Contacts for where to get help (see over for details)

If using NHS services you are entitled to independent and anonymous interpreters and can request for a chaperone to be present if required.