



MULTIDISCIPLINARY CENTRE GENITAL MUTILATION

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

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01 WHAT IS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION?

The term Female Genital Mutilation or FGM refers to all procedures resulting in the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical purposes (WHO 2008). Female genital mutilation is a form of gender-based violence and a violation on women's human rights as well as their sexual, mental and physical health.

02 WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF FGM?

FGM negatively impacts women's health in the short, medium and long term. It can even lead to death.

In addition to immediate medical complications such as bleeding and infections, psychological trauma often occurs. This can lead to a lack of self-confidence and a sexual dysfunction. Long term consequences can be recurring infections, pain and complications during childbirth.

03 FGM IN FIGURES

- ▲ According to the WHO, more than 200 million women **worldwide** have undergone some form of FGM.
- ▲ According to the European Parliament, 600,000 women in **Europe** are living with FGM and 180,000 girls in Europe are at risk of being cut.
- ▲ In **Belgium**, it is estimated that more than 93,000 girls and women come from a country where FGM is practised. Of these, most likely 23,000 have undergone FGM and 12,000 are at risk of being cut if no preventative action is taken (estimates as of 31 December 2020, Institute for the Equality of Women and Men (IEWM) and FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment).

04 MULTIDISCIPLINARY CARE

Individual care programme

The care on offer is based on a multidisciplinary approach. The aim is to provide an individual care program for every woman. The team consists of an obstetrician, a psychologist/sexologist and a gynaecologist. Depending on the care demand, a referral can be made to a urologist, physiotherapist or plastic surgeon. The woman's autonomy is key during this multidisciplinary care programme.

Psychological guidance

Guidance from a psychologist/sexologist can support the woman in her self-development and the discovery of her femininity and own sexuality. Based on the woman's history, her skills are mapped and self-esteem is strengthened. An attempt is made to develop a sense of security and to help the woman deal with the emotions evoked by her past or current experiences.

Surgical treatment

Desinfibulation

In the case of infibulation, the inner or outer labia are glued or sewn together narrowing the vaginal opening. Desinfibulation consists of re-opening what is closed, and thus restoring the vaginal opening. After the operation the final appearance of the vulva depends on what was cut (of the clitoris and inner labia).

Treatment of cysts

The formation of dermal inclusion cysts is a common complication of female genital mutilation. These cysts can be surgically removed.

Clitoral reconstruction

The clitoris is a complex organ and measures 7-8 cm. During the FGM, it is mostly the visible external part (the gland of the clitoris) that is injured or removed. The non-visible internal part remains and can still be aroused by external stimulation or during penetration.

Clitoral reconstructive surgery consists of re-exposing the remaining part of the clitoris.

This procedure has been shown to be effective in restoring the woman's bodily integrity. In some cases, the clitoral function can also be restored.

Refund

Since 1 March 2014, there is an agreement with the INAMI/RIZIV and the recognised multidisciplinary reference centers (Women's Clinic UZ Gent and CeMAViE CHU Saint-Pierre Brussels). The medical and psychological/sexological consultations and the surgery of women affected by FGM are reimbursed by the Belgian social security system.



Image from the animated film: 'It's my life' - Multidisciplinary care after FGM
www.atypicalist.com

05 MULTIDISCIPLINARY CENTRE GENITAL MUTILATION

Team

Gynaecologists

Prof. dr. Kristien Roelens
 Dr. Nele Coryn

Midwives

Marilyn D'hondt
 Ine Vanhee
 Evi De Backer

Psychologist/sexologist

Sarah Van de Walle

Surgeons genital surgery

Prof. dr. Steven Weyers
 Prof. dr. Marlon Buncamper, plastic surgeon

Physiotherapist

Bie Stockman

Social service

Cel Sofia

Make an appointment

The Center holds consultations on Wednesday and Thursday mornings.
 You can make an appointment on 09 332 37 82.

Accessibility

More information about how to reach UZ Gent can be found at www.uzgent.be/bereikbaarheid.

Women's hospital (Vrouwenkliniek)

Entrance 71, route 710

T +32 (0)9 332 37 82

www.uzgent.be/vrouwenkliniek

In cooperation with and with the support of

CeMAViE - CHU Saint-Pierre Brussels | **GAMS Belgium** | **The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men** | **FPS Public Health**

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