

What does the law say?

In Switzerland, the practice of FGM is illegal (art. 124 criminal code). All forms of FGM must be punished even in cases when they have been performed in a foreign country. They incur penalties ranging from a fine to a ten-years imprisonment.

International conventions condemn this practice. In some countries of origin, FGM is prohibited by law.

More information on:
www.excision.ch

What to do?

- > Have you heard of FGM within your family?
- > Are you afraid of going on holiday to your home country?
- > Does a friend confide in you about FGM?
- > Are you a health or educational professional confronted with the issue of FGM?

Feel free to contact the Cantonal Sexual Health Centre to receive confidential advice and support.

Cantonal Sexual Health Centre CFSS

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**Female genital
mutilation (FGM)**

What is female genital mutilation FGM?

FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Sometimes FGM is called differently.

Who is concerned by FGM?

Girls and women of all ages and backgrounds, from various countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

On the African continent one in every three women is subject to FGM.

Because of international migration, FGM also occurs nowadays in Europe countries including Switzerland

What are the origins of FGM?

It is an ancient practice that appeared before all the current religions. Traditionally, FGM is performed to enable women to be accepted into a social group, meet the group's expectations or achieve a certain social status.

Contrary to popular belief, no religion calls for the practice of FGM. It does not increase fertility and may even make women sterile.

What are the consequences of FGM?

FGM has serious immediate and medium-term consequences on physical and psychological health.

Women subjected to FMG suffer of severe pain, bleeding, burns and infections. Other negative effects may be psychological distress or physical complications during sexual intercourse or childbirth.

FGM threatens the health of girls and women.