



Female  
circumcision or  
genital mutilation  
(FGM)

[thl.fi/fgm](https://thl.fi/fgm)



# Female circumcision or genital mutilation (FGM)

**Female circumcision (genital mutilation, FGM) refers to the removal of or damage to girl's and women's external genitals without a medical reason.**

Female genital mutilation is related to culture, and it is usually done with the idea of protecting the child. Social and moral reasons may also influence the families continuing this tradition. It can be used to connect a girl to her own culture and family.

FGM violates many human rights and is a crime in Finland. FGM performed abroad is also a crime if the victim is a permanent resident of Finland.

There are different forms of FGM. In some cases, it is a small puncture or incision



in the genitals, and in the most radical forms, the external genitals may be removed almost completely.

There are no health benefits to FGM. It usually causes health hazards, such as bleeding, infections, pain and psychological problems.

## Help is available for the problems caused by FGM

### Opening surgery

- With an opening surgery, the closed labia can be opened. This can help with problems related to menstrual bleeding, urination, intercourse and childbirth.
- The surgery is usually performed under local anaesthesia. It can also be done during pregnancy.

### Reconstructive surgery

- Reconstructive surgery aims to restore the normal structure and function of the female external genitals.

- Reconstructive surgery is more extensive than opening surgery and is usually performed under anaesthesia.
- In Finland, reconstructive surgery is available via public healthcare. Reconstructive surgery is carried out in HUS Plastic Surgery unit.

**The tradition of FGM causes health hazards and is a crime. Let's break the chain of tradition together!**

## HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you are at risk of FGM, contact the police by calling 112 or tell a social welfare or healthcare professional, a teacher or another professional about the situation.

### Nollalinja helpline:

[nollalinja.fi/en](https://nollalinja.fi/en) or call 080 005 005

### Shelters:

[nollalinja.fi/en/](https://nollalinja.fi/en/shelters-for-victims-of-domestic-violence)

[shelters-for-victims-of-domestic-violence](https://nollalinja.fi/en/shelters-for-victims-of-domestic-violence)

**African Care:** [africancare.fi](https://africancare.fi)

**The Finnish League for Human Rights:**

[ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/english](https://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/english)



More information

[thl.fi/fgm](https://thl.fi/fgm)

THL Work against violence

[thl.fi/vakivalta](https://thl.fi/vakivalta)