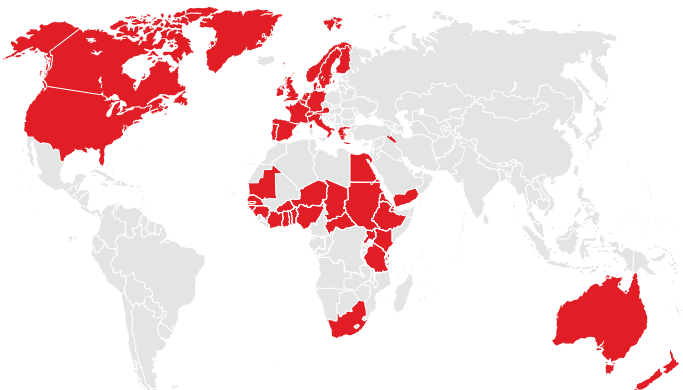


In Switzerland female circumcision constitutes a bodily harm and is prohibited. It can be punished with up to ten years in prison, even if the girl has agreed to the circumcision.

Whoever performs, takes part or participates in the planning of female circumcision will be punished, no matter whether they are doctors, circumcisers, parents or family members. Female circumcision may also be punishable when it is performed in another country.

Furthermore, female circumcision violates international law and is prohibited in many countries.

LAWS AGAINST FEMALE CIRCUMCISION



■ prohibited

Female circumcision is prohibited in the following countries: all Western European countries, Egypt, Ethiopia, Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Yemen, Canada, Kenya, Mauretania, Niger, Nigeria, New Zealand, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Chad, Uganda, USA, and Central African Republic (July 2010)

Various African countries campaign against female circumcision with information campaigns, films or plays. Many communities publicly and collectively speak out against the practice of female circumcision.

For further information and support please contact Caritas Switzerland or TERRE DES FEMMES Schweiz:

Caritas Switzerland – Communication Centre for the Prevention of Female Excision in Switzerland, Löwenstrasse 3, 6002 Luzern, 041 419 23 55

TERRE DES FEMMES Schweiz, Standstrasse 32, 3014 Bern, 031 311 38 79

MEDICAL SUPPORT

Women's Hospital, Inselspital Bern, Effingerstrasse 102, 3010 Berne, 031 632 16 14

University Hospital Lausanne (CHUV), Dept. of Gynecology, Obstetrics and Medical Genetics

Psychosocial division, Av. Pierre Decker, 1011 Lausanne, 021 314 32 45

Adolescent gynaecology, UM5A, Av. Beaumont 48, 1011 Lausanne, 021 314 37 60

University Hospital Geneva (HUG)

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, 30, bd de la Cluse, 1205 Genève, 022 382 68 16

Department of Community Medicine, Planning Familial (CIFERN), 47, bd de la Cluse, 1205 Genève, 022 372 55 00

University Hospital Zurich, Division of Gynaecology, Frauenklinikstrasse 10, 8091 Zurich,

044 255 50 36/37

Women's Hospital, University Hospital Basel, Spitalstrasse 21, 4031 Basel, 061 265 90 43

Clinique Vert-Pré, Plastic surgery Centre, 15 chemin de la Colombe, 1231 Conches / Geneva,

022 704 31 13

Cantonal Women's Hospital St. Gallen, Rorschacherstrasse 95, 9007 St. Gallen,

071 494 20 21

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology CHCVS, Hospital Sion,

Avenue du Grand-Champsec 80, 1950 Sion, 027 603 42 16/17

Helpdesks - advice on pregnancy and family planning in your area is available here:

www.isis-info.ch

MEETING POINTS & SUPPORT FOR WOMEN MIGRANTS

Berne: Somali Women's Group, 078 901 50 92

Geneva: Camarada (Centre and basic education for migrant women), Chemin de Villars 19,

1203 Genève, 022 344 03 39

Lausanne: Appartenances (Centre, education and counselling), Rue des Terreaux 10,

1000 Lausanne 9, 021 351 28 80

Eastern Switzerland/Zurich: Eastern Swiss Women's Group, 078 895 53 45

Sion: Association KALKAL, 079 613 93 47

Ticino: Antenna MayDay, Via Merlina 3a/b, 6962 Viganello, 091 973 70 67 /

African Community of Ticino, Lugano, 076 702 56 23

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This publication is also available in German, French, Arabic, Amharic, Somali and Tigrinya.

Ordering: www.migesplus.ch – Health information is available in several languages via the Swiss Red Cross,

Department of Health and Integration or www.terre-des-femmes.ch

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Female Circumcision – We will protect our daughters

Information for parents and women affected by female circumcision

Layout: www.walther.ch



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA
Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

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TERRE DES FEMMES
Schweiz

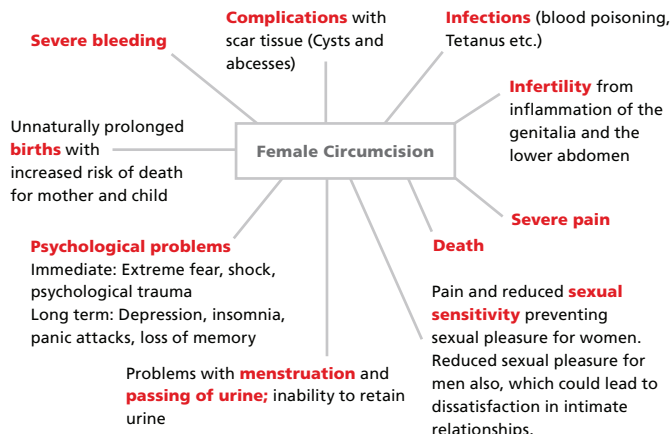
Circumcision of girls and women can lead to severe health problems and is prohibited in Switzerland.

What is female circumcision?

Female circumcision means removing parts or all of the outer female genital organs or otherwise injuring them without medical grounds. Female circumcision may involve the complete or partial removal of the clitoris (Incision/Sunna), the removal of the clitoris and the labia minora (Excision) or the entire removal of the outer female genital organs (including the labia majora) and sewing together the remaining skin to leave a extremely small opening (Infibulation).

Female circumcision includes also all other practices which injure the female genitalia (for example puncturation, cutting, tearing or burning of the clitoris).

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS OF FEMALE CIRCUMCISION?



The complications may vary according to the type of female circumcision and how it is carried out.

INFORMATION FOR CIRCUMCISED WOMEN

Female circumcision is irreversible. However complications stemming from the circumcision can be treated. Furthermore, there are surgical options to widen the vagina and to partly reconstruct the clitoris.

Your rights

You have the right to obtain information and to understand when medical professionals explain something to you. If you have problems with the language you can ask for a female intercultural translator.

Speak to a professional that you trust.

Do not hesitate to speak openly to a medical professional. They are increasingly aware of female circumcision and will aim to offer you adequate medical treatment.

Pregnancy & birth

Talk to your doctor as early as possible during your pregnancy about your circumcision in order to prepare for the birth.

Psychological support

Find psychological support if you need it.

In case of infibulation an operation (defibulation) may help to alleviate certain problems. During this operation scar tissue covering the vagina will be opened. The operation may reduce pain during menstruation, help with difficulties when passing urine, reduce or prevent reoccurring bladder infections and help to alleviate painful intercourse as well as complications in childbirth. Infibulation does not automatically mean delivery has to be by caesarean. With a defibulation a normal birth may be possible. Defibulation may be performed before or during a birth. After a birth you will not be infibulated again.

WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT FEMALE CIRCUMCISION?

«Nobody is saying your religion is wrong, nobody is saying your tradition or culture is wrong. All we are saying is that female circumcision is just not right. We are in the 21th century, let's make it a thing of the past!»

Mark Emmanuel, African Mirror Foundation

«God created you in the perfect shape, and those who say the clitoris is not supposed to be there – are you questioning the wisdom of God's creation?»

Sheikh Abdullahii Gudow, religious scholar Kenya

«We talk about the fact that we have a good culture. We love our children. We respect our elders and take care of them in old age. These are values we want to retain. But practices that go against our women and our children must change.»

Zeinab Ahmed, UNICEF Kenya

«Traditions are not static. They change, new norms develop and new information is won. The inevitable social change will also put into question female genital mutilation.»

Berhane Ras-Work, President of the Inter-African Committee

«More and more men want to have uncut women. Firstly to save the woman pain and that she can feel more, and secondly that the man does not have to feel guilty.»

Jamal Mohamed

«The practice of female circumcision does not guarantee virginity nor does it stop promiscuous behaviour. It is also no guarantee for fertility. On the contrary, female circumcision often leads to infections that may cause infertility.»

Berhane Ras-Work, President of the Inter-African Committee