



# Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

## What is Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting?

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting is the deliberate cutting or altering of the female genital area for no medical reason. It has many names, including cutting, female circumcision and ritual female surgery. It is harmful to women's health and is not necessary.

If you or someone you know is in danger call the police on **000**.

Police in Australia are safe and can be trusted.

For free, confidential counselling and information call 1800RESPECT on **1800 737 732**.

If you need a free interpreter call **131 450**.

## Medical help and support is available in Australia.

If you have been affected by one of these procedures you can access free health care and support in Australia. Doctors, nurses, other medical professionals and teachers can help you.

If you are planning on having a baby, you may want to speak to a doctor, nurse or other medical professional to gain extra support for when you are pregnant and when you have your baby.

## Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting is a serious crime in Australia.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting is illegal in Australia. This includes sending a person overseas to have a procedure done, or facilitating, supporting or encouraging someone to have this done.

A person who commits these crimes can go to jail, whether they are a man or a woman.

If you have been affected by one of these procedures, you are encouraged to seek help and will not be punished under Australian law.

## There are other services and resources that can help.

You can find information on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting on the **National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness website** at [www.netfa.com.au](http://www.netfa.com.au).

**1800RESPECT** is Australia's national sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling service. It provides free, confidential telephone and online counselling and information. Counsellors will listen to you, answer questions and can refer you to other support services in your local area.

Call **1800 737 732** or go to the **1800RESPECT website** at [www.1800RESPECT.org.au](http://www.1800RESPECT.org.au).

If you, or someone you know, has been taken overseas for this procedure or you think they are at risk of being taken out of the country for the procedure, call the 24/7 Consular Emergency Centre at **1300 555 135** (from Australia) or **+61 2 6261 3304** (from overseas) or contact the nearest Australian overseas mission at [dfat.gov.au](http://dfat.gov.au).

## Do you need an interpreter?

Call the **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)** on **131 450**. An interpreter from TIS can help you to communicate with other services, however TIS does not provide counselling. All calls are free and confidential.