

- Bleeding
- Shock
- Birth difficulties
- Decreased sexual satisfaction
- Painful menstruation

- There should be community support systems for women of African descent to foster opportunity to socialize and talk about cultural issues

**Health Services concerns:**

- Hard to relate with Doctors
- Providers are not educated about FGM
- Lack of understanding of FGM to stand up against the practice
- Less satisfaction with providers due to:
  - Wait times
  - Doctors not paying enough attention

**Recommendations of Uzima Relief Group International**

- Education and awareness on FGM is needed for communities and service providers
- Proactive steps should be taken to enforce the law against FGM
- Address anti-oppression in a direct way to empower women
- There should be some visual signage and campaign by Health care institutions to show support for women's rights surrounding FGM

This study was funded by



<http://www.womensresearch.ca/>

Read the full report at WCH and UZIMA websites

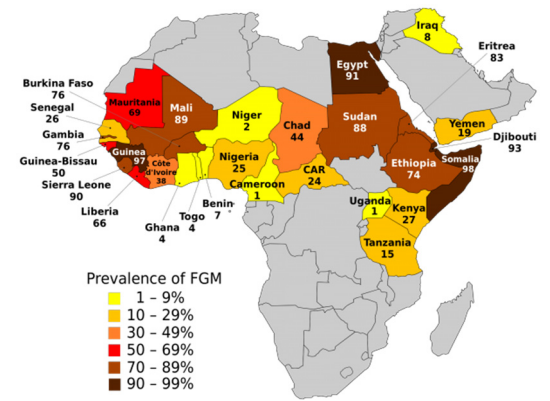


**Uzima Women Relief Group International**  
Giving a new meaning of Life, hope and bright future to all women

[www.uzimawomeninternational.org](http://www.uzimawomeninternational.org)



**THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**



<http://fgm.co.nz/where-is-fgm-practiced/>



## Background

- Approximately 200 million women and girls around the world presently suffer the often awful consequences of FGM, which is also known as Female Genital Cutting or Female Circumcision with the practice most concentrated in Asia, The Middle East and Africa.  
([www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241))
- Canada has banned FGM – It is Aggravated Assault punishable by law

## Research Study

- **Uzima Women Relief Group International** conducted a study on health concerns of African women affected by the practice of FGM
- The study was conducted among African women in Toronto from African countries where FGM is practiced
- The aim of the research was to explore what health concerns and issues women with FGM are experiencing as well as determining their understanding of the Canadian law against it.
- As well as interviewing women, communities' perceptions and service providers' experiences were sought

## Results of the study

- 21 women, 11 service providers and 8 community leaders were interviewed.
- 47% (10/21) women interviewed said that FGM is a stigmatized topic and some women may be afraid to disclose it to their service providers
- More than 90% (20/21) of the women interviewed have experienced a form of FGM which happened between infancy and adulthood
- This is an indication that many women from Africa are living with FGM experience
- All women expressed concern about the harm associated with the practice saying most of the injury is permanent and cannot be reversed
- Some community leaders said it is done for both cultural and religious reasons
- Some of the religious community leaders said that good morals and discipline can be instilled through education and mentoring without causing bodily harm
- All participants agreed there is serious harm associated with FGM and they expressed concerns on the health of women and entire communities

- In all the women interviewed, FGM was done at home rather than in a hospital.
- Reasons given for FGM included:
  - Transition to womanhood
  - Reducing sexual desire
  - Cultural/Religious norm to protect girls ensuring high moral standing necessary for marriage
  - Family's choice

### **Social Concerns:**

- Talking about FGM outside of cultural group
- Shame
- Hard to date outside culture because of stigma from FGM in Canada
- Relationship stigmatization
- Infidelity by husbands
- Divorce
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### **Health Concerns:**

- All women have suffered the consequences of FGM including :
  - Severe psychological trauma resulting in mental health issues such as stress and depression
  - Reproductive and urinary system complications