

## Key Facts:

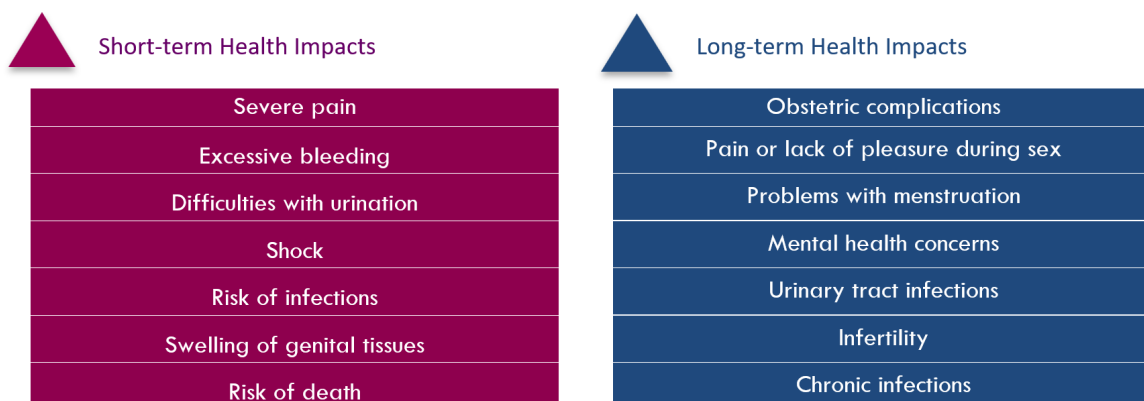
- FGM/C has long lasting physical and mental health effects on women and girls.(1)
- FGM/C is not supported or mandated by any religion.(2)
- An estimated 513,000 girls and women in the U.S. have undergone or are at risk of being subjected to FGM/C.(3)
- In the U.S., 41 states to date (early 2023) have passed specific legislation that criminalizes FGM/C.(4)

## Overview of FGM/C

- Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) is "partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or any other injury of the female genital organs for non-medical reasons."(1)
- The practice of FGM/C is not limited to a few regions in the world. As of January 2020, evidence of FGM/C was found globally in at least 92 countries.(5)
- Girls are typically cut anytime between birth and 15 years old.(1)
- Traditional practitioners, birth attendants and professional health care providers perform the cutting.(6)
- FGM/C is a cultural practice and is not rooted in any one religion despite common beliefs that it is. Girls who do not undergo mutilation/cutting can face community shaming and diminished marriage prospects.(2)
- The procedure has been universally condemned by international human rights organizations because it severely harms the health of women and girls throughout their lifetime.(1,7)

## Health Impacts of FGM/C

Below is a non-exhaustive list of common health impacts and consequences that can occur immediately or may persist throughout a woman's life due to experiencing FGM/C (1):



## Prevalence of FGM/C in the U.S.

- In 2012, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that there were over half a million girls and women living the U.S. who experienced or were at risk of FGM/C.(3)
- It is crucial for local child protection agencies to enforce laws surrounding FGM/C so as to protect girls from the harmful practice.

## Is FGM/C legal in the U.S.?

- No, FGM/C is illegal in the U.S. In 1996, 18 U.S. Code § 116 'Female Genital Mutilation' was enacted, establishing federal law against conspiring, attempting to, and performing FGM/C on anyone under the age of 18.(8) This law has been amended twice since (in 2013 and 2021) to strengthen protections against FGM/C.(9)
- States also have jurisdictional authority to enact express legislation to criminalize the act of FGM/C within their territories.(10)
- As of early 2023, 41 states have passed some form of anti-FGM/C legislation that carries criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment.(4)

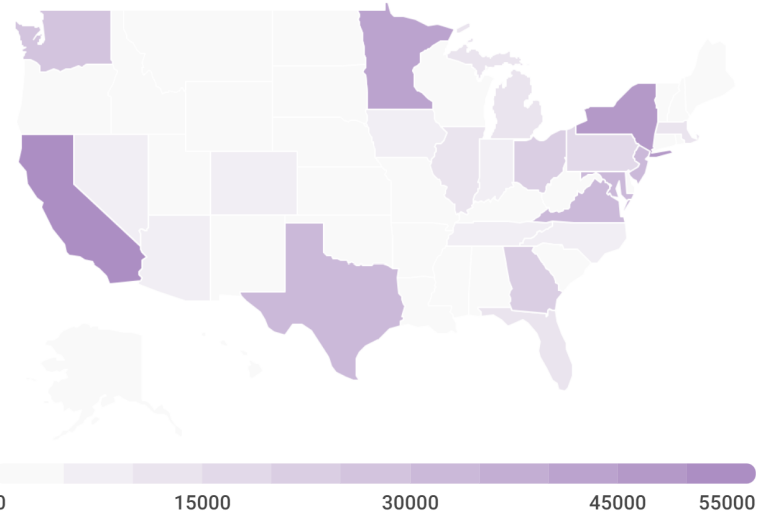
## Prevalence of FGM/C around the world

- Over 200 million girls and women globally have undergone some type of FGM/C.(1)
- Available UNICEF 2016 data show that FGM/C is concentrated mostly throughout Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.(1)
- It is important to note that there are variations in the type(s) performed, circumstances surrounding the practice, and size of affected population groups.
- With increased international migration, the practice of FGM/C is not restricted to the practicing origin countries.

## References

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## Risk of FGM/C for girls and women (ages 15-49) in the U.S.



Source: Population Reference Bureau (PRB) - 2013 preliminary data.