

Issues you may encounter at a cytology appointment and things to consider.

Christine Black
Con SRH
March 24

Aims and Objectives

- Raise awareness
- Identify concerns
- Manage them
 - STIs
 - Menopausal symptoms
 - Psycho-sexual problems
 - FGM

Cytology appointment

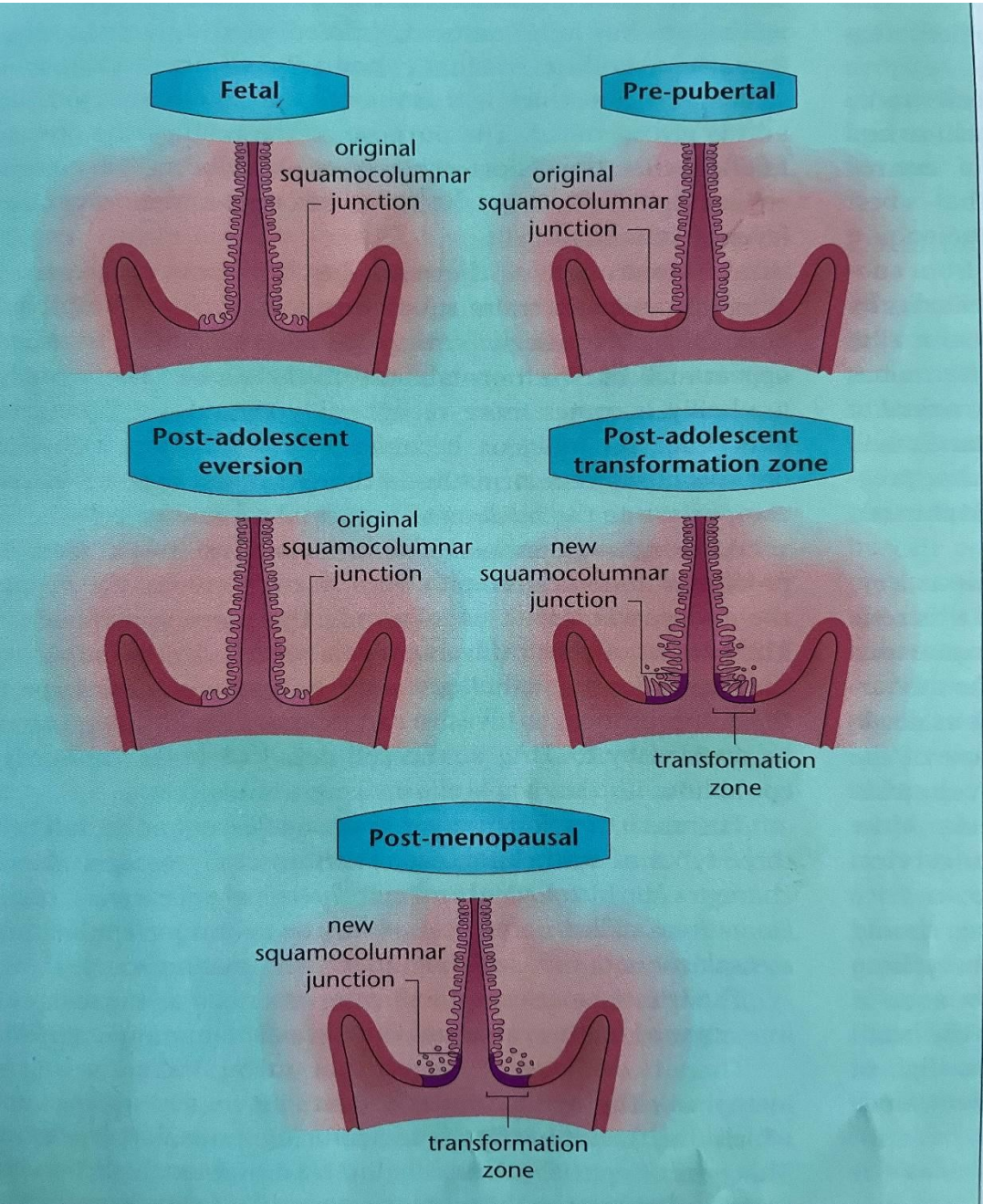
- Reality of a 10 min consultation + paperwork + SCCRS



Cytology appointment

- Woman's Health Consultation!
- You are doing a vaginal examination, opportunity to **screen, observe and reflect**
- **Identify and refer onwards if needed**

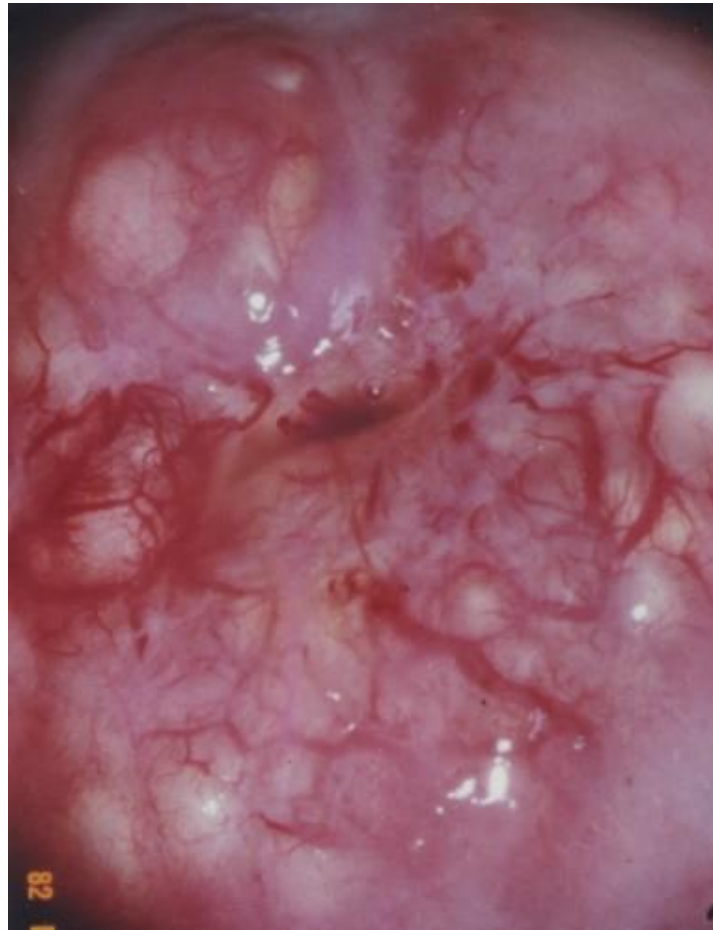




Ectopy

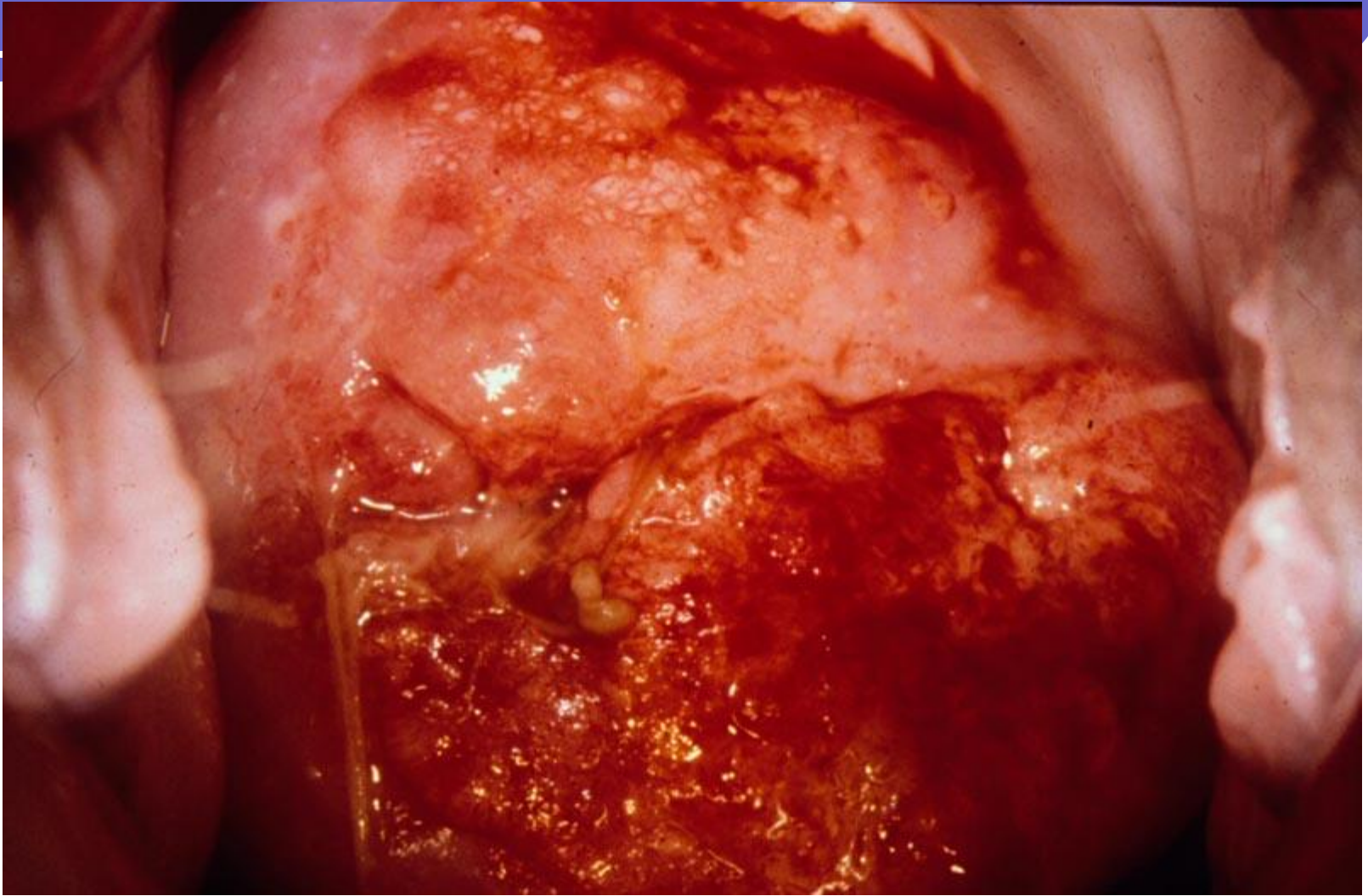


Nabothian follicles





© Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists



Resources

- [Cervix Photo Galleries | Beautiful Cervix Project](#)
- [BSCCP | Image Gallery](#)
- [Image library | DermNet \(dermnetnz.org\)](#)
- [Colposcopy Digital Atlas \(iarc.fr\)](#)

Sexually Transmitted Infections

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a BBC News article. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-65810160>. The page features a red navigation bar with the word "NEWS" in white. Below this, a secondary red bar contains navigation links: Home, Israel-Gaza war, Cost of Living, War in Ukraine, Climate, UK, World, Business, Politics, Culture, and a "More" menu icon. The article is categorized under "Health". The main headline reads "Gonorrhoea and syphilis sex infections reach record levels in England", dated "6 June 2023". A red share icon is visible below the date. A photograph of two hands is partially visible at the bottom of the article. To the right, a "Top Stories" section lists three items: "I will only cut taxes in responsible way - Hunt" (4 hours ago), "Israeli hostages status hangs over Gaza truce talks" (50 minutes ago), and "Brit Awards 2024: The real winners and losers" (9 hours ago). The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the search bar, taskbar icons for Edge, File Explorer, and PowerPoint, and system tray icons for network, volume, and date/time (16:44, 03/03/2024).

NEWS

Home | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture | More

Health

Gonorrhoea and syphilis sex infections reach record levels in England

6 June 2023

Top Stories

- I will only cut taxes in responsible way - Hunt
4 hours ago
- Israeli hostages status hangs over Gaza truce talks
50 minutes ago
- Brit Awards 2024: The real winners and losers
9 hours ago

STI

- Gonorrhoea : 5641 cases 2022
- Chlamydia : 13148 cases 2022
- HIV : 317 cases 2022

Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Many women assume because they had a smear test taken they also had a STI screen!...and vice versa

Sexually Transmitted Infections

- You are doing a vaginal examination, take the opportunity to **screen**, observe and reflect
- Sexual history
- Especially so if somebody complains of discharge, post-coital bleeding or inter-menstrual bleeding

HIV

- CIN2+ is “an indicator disease” for HIV infection.

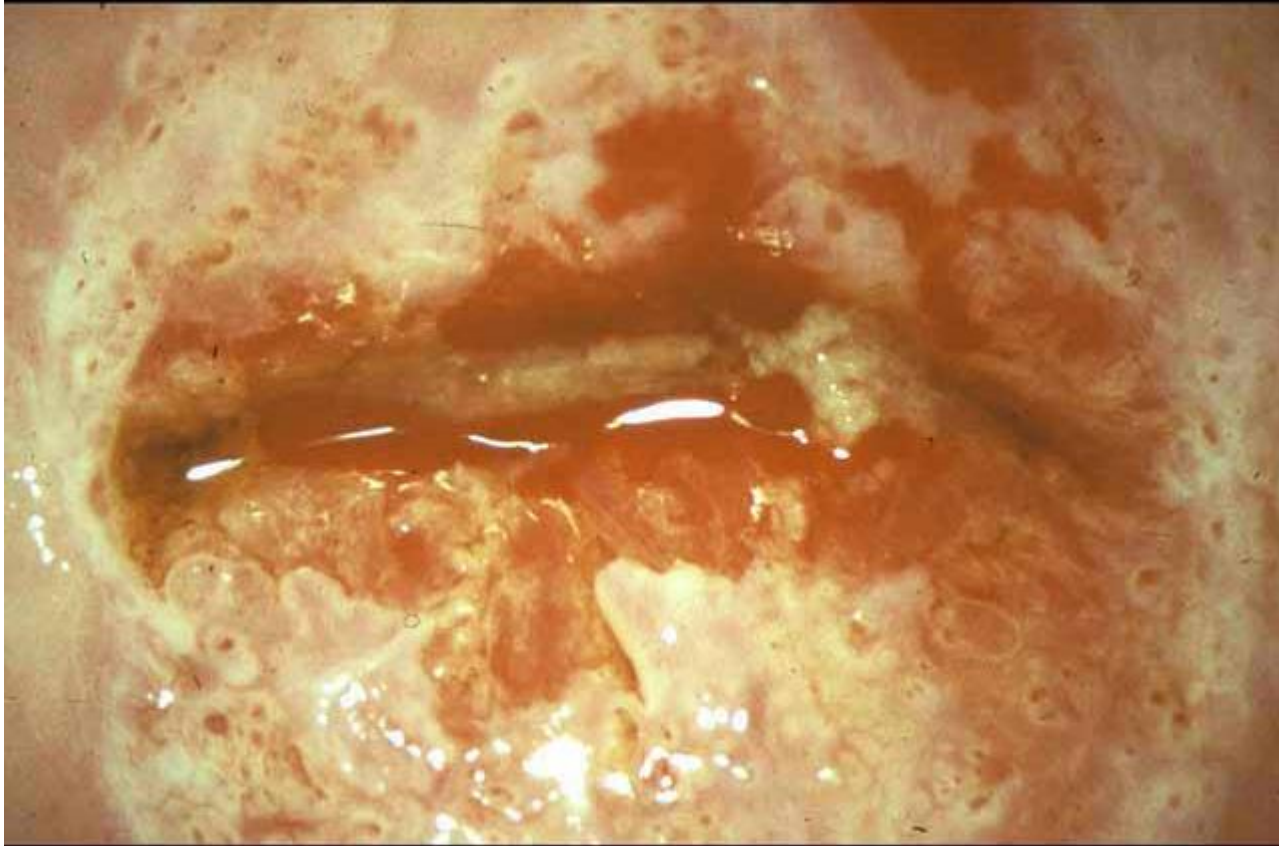
[BHIVA/BASHH/BIA Adult HIV Testing guidelines 2020](#)

December 2022, an estimated 6,600 people were living with HIV in Scotland, of whom 6,150 (93%) had been diagnosed.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Review **your** clinic/room
 - Is it set up for Chlamydia/Gonorrhoea screening?
What tests are used?
 - What forms do you require?
 - Where do tests go?
 - What happens if there is a positive result?
 - **You can make any changes needed**
 - **Make HIV and Syphilis testing as part of a routine SHS.**

Cervicitis



Endometriosis.



Sexually Transmitted Infections

- **One question only**

- ‘Would you like a SHS screen?’
- ‘Have you had sex with somebody new within the last 6 months?’
- ‘When was the last time you had sex with anybody else?’
- Find the right words for your clients and your clinic

Case 1

- 23 year old, not had smear test, requesting one... anxious as a friend has been diagnosed with 'cancer'.

Case 2

- 38 year old, hasn't had smear test for years, 'too scared', now a friend has been diagnosed with 'cancer'.

- Questions?

Menopause



Vulva-Vagina-Cervix

- You are doing a vaginal examination, take the opportunity to **screen, observe and reflect**

Vulva-Vagina-Cervix

- What are you looking for?

[Photo Gallery | Labia Library](#)

- **Vulva:**

- Skin conditions (eczema, psoriasis, warts, ulcers, VAIN, Lichen sclerosis)
- Signs of chronic itch and scratching
- Fissuring
- Dryness

Pictures of vulval skin conditions

- [Image library | DermNet \(dermnetz.org\)](http://dermnetz.org)

LS plus atrophy



Vulval eczema



Vulva-Vagina-Cervix

- How long has the change been there?
- Are there any symptoms, such as pain, itch, bleeding, dryness?
- Does it interfere with life (not only sex life, but cycling, sitting, working...)

Vulva-Vagina-Cervix

- Refer for specialist advice
- Give simple advice
 - Avoid all soap (even Dove!) No bubbles or Bombs!
 - Avoid irritating substances
 - Moisturise (Dermol 500, Epaderm, Aqueous cream) twice a day

Postmenopausal changes

Vulva-Vagina-Cervix

- **Vaginal and Cervical Atrophy**
 - Thin mucosa/skin
 - Pain with speculum insertion
 - Smooth shiny vaginal walls, lack of elasticity
 - Petechial bleeding on gentle touch
 - Small shiny cervix, sometimes flush with vaginal wall, difficult to find cx os
 - Repeated unsatisfactory smears postmenopausally

Vulva-Vagina-Cervix

- Women find it difficult to mentioned it themselves, we need to ask
- Does this cause problems with sex?

How common is VV atrophy?

- Very
- Not only in postmenopausal women but in women following breast cancer treatment, sometimes with Depo-Provera, breast feeding and following radiotherapy....

Case 3

- 54 year old woman for smear, always normal, recent examination very uncomfortable and 'unsatisfactory' result, now really worried about repeated test
- What would you do?
- Useful resource:
www.menopausematters.co.uk

Treatment for VV atrophy

- General vulval skin care advice
- Vaginal moisturisers (Replens, Regelle, Yes)
- HRT (systemic and local)
- Local estrogen (**Vagirux/vagifem** tablets, Ovestin cream, Estring) is safe and needs to be given **lifelong**
- **Lubricants**
- **Psychosexual problems need to be addressed, too, often secondary due to atrophy**

- Questions?

Psycho-sexual problems

- You are doing a vaginal examination, take the opportunity to **screen, observe and reflect**

Reasons **not** to deal with psycho-sexual issues

- Lack of time
- Unable to 'fix problem'
- Perceived lack of training and how to talk about sex
- Fear of exposing own sexual difficulties/fears
-

What are we looking for / indicators

- Avoidance of smear test!
- Never being happy with any offered method of contraception
- Response during examination
 - Difficulties with actual examination
 - 'I couldn't do your job-how awful'
 - Detachment
 - Giggle/embarrassment

What are we looking for / indicators

- What do you feel during examination?
 - Sudden embarrassment
 - Anxiety
 - Tension
 - Nervousness
-
- You might be sensing a reflection of the patients feelings

Reasons for psychosex problems

- Body image (menopause, colostomy...)
- Domestic Abuse
- Past sexual abuse
- Relationship breakdown
- Infertility
- Loss of parent, child, pregnancy
- Incontinence.....

- Never / very infrequently been sexually active
- Atrophy
- Previous surgery
- Medical problems like arthritis, disabilities challenging mobility

First steps we can do to help

- Reflect: 'I have the impression this is very difficult for you.....

.....

.....

.....

.

First steps we can do to help

- Listen
- Recognise/reflect/acknowledge problem with patient
- Share distress
- Acknowledge you do not have all the answers!
- Invite back
- Refer onwards **if** requested/ready to deal with the problem
- My Body Back Clinic?

- Questions?

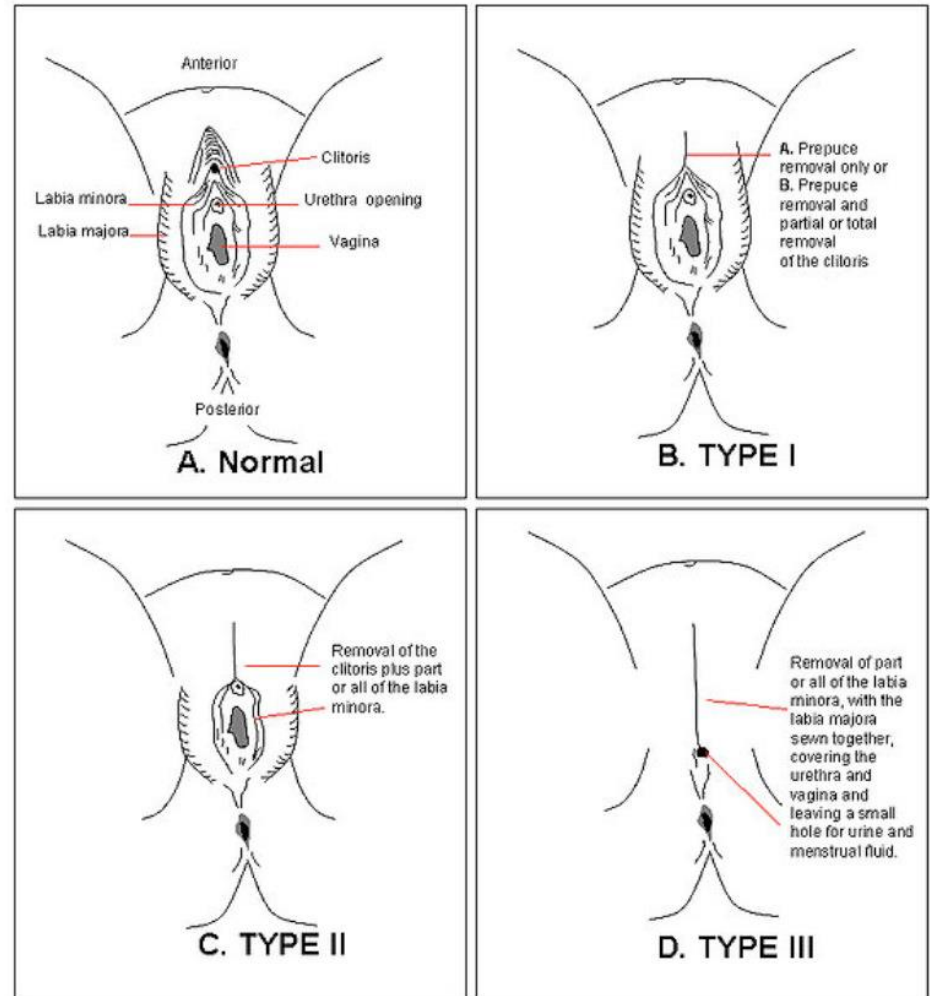
My Body Back

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the URL <https://mybodybackproject.com/book-an-appointment/>. The browser's address bar shows several tabs, including 'Sign in', 'Imac', 'Derm', 'Colp', 'goni', 'ggc', 'GGC', 'The', and 'Boo'. The website's header features social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram on the left, and 'Language' and 'Accessibility' links on the right. The main content area has a large, circular logo on the left with the text 'my body back' inside. To the right of the logo, the heading 'The My Body Back Project' is displayed in a large, bold font. Below the heading, a paragraph states: 'We offer cervical screening, contraceptive care, STI testing and maternity care for people who've experienced sexual violence.' A navigation menu below this text includes links for 'Home', 'Services', 'Book', 'Resources', 'FAQs', and 'About us'. At the bottom of the page, a large teal button reads 'Book an appointment'. The Windows taskbar at the bottom of the screen shows the search bar with the text 'Type here to search', several application icons, and the system tray with the time '17:11' and date '03/03/2024'.

FGM

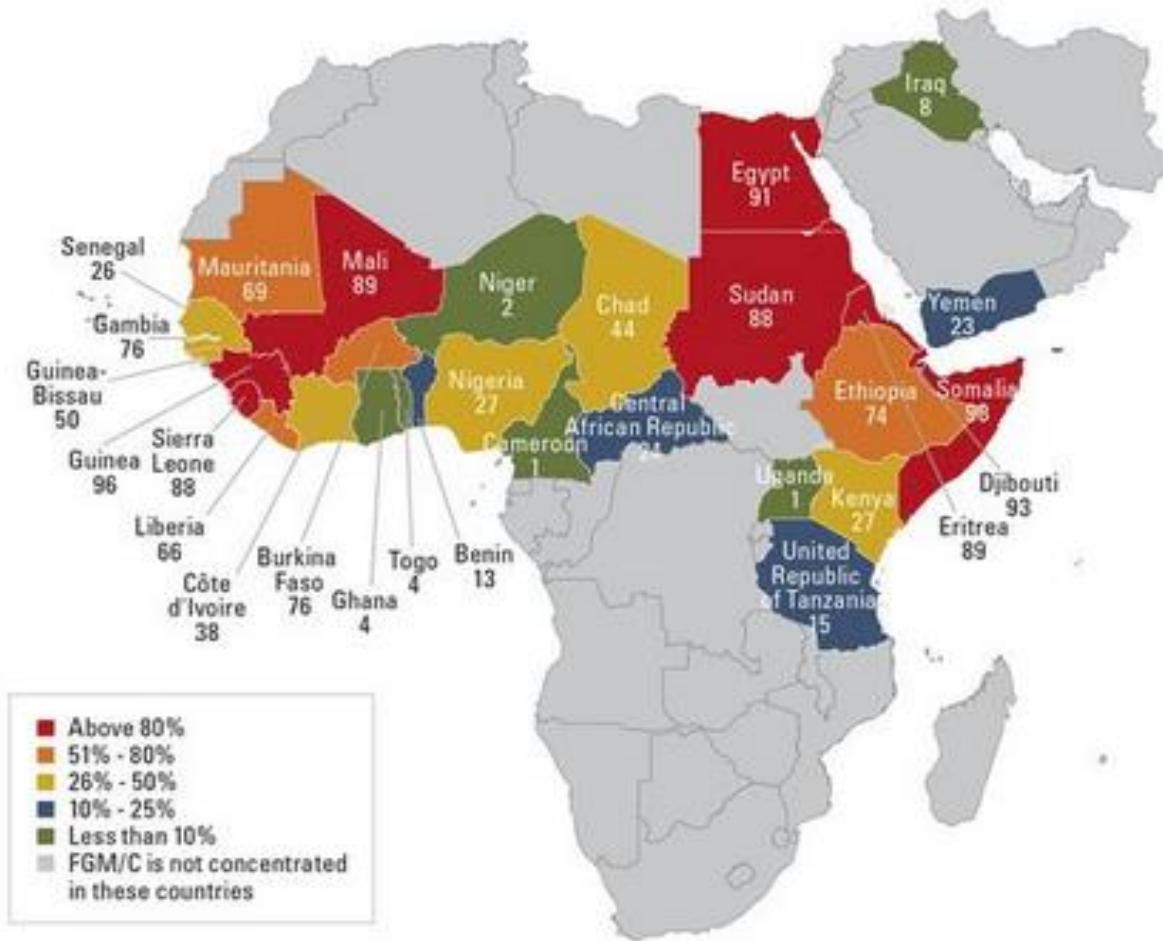
What is FGM

- Collective term for procedures carried out for non medical reasons that remove, cut, or mutilate the female genitalia
- Types I- IV
- IV includes piercing,pricking, stretching,cauterising, corroding



Map 4.1 FGM/C is concentrated in a swath of countries from the Atlantic Coast to the Horn of Africa

Percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM/C, by country



Guidance

- RCOG patient info and Green top guideline
- [HOME \(fgmaware.org\)](http://fgmaware.org)
- [Female genital mutilation: the facts - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- [Free FGM Training Online | Recognising & Preventing FGM Free Course | Virtual College \(virtual-college.co.uk\)](http://virtual-college.co.uk)

Your role

Identify, support, protect

- Ask the question.. “have you been cut?”
“are you open or closed?”
- Be culturally sensitive but still ask
- Children born to women who have experienced FGM are at risk
- Opportunity to discuss and protect

Recommended actions

- Issues for the woman?..referral to acute gynaecology
- Support www.saheliya.co.uk
- Record client's feelings about the practice
- Identify young girls at potential risk ;childrens name /DOB/school
- Flag them up to HV/School nurse/social work

Not sure what to do ask the CPU

Requirement to record FH of FGM on medical records

Thank you