



Women's Health Needs Study (WHNS): Washington, D.C.^a

The WHNS was a **one-time survey** that collected information on women's health care experiences and needs, as well as female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).

The study took place from **November 2020 to June 2021** in four metropolitan areas in the United States (**Atlanta, Minneapolis, New York, and Washington, D.C.**). The data below represent women surveyed in the **Washington, D.C.** metropolitan area.

ELIGIBILITY

Women ages
18 to 49



Born, or mother was
born, in a country where
FGM/C is common

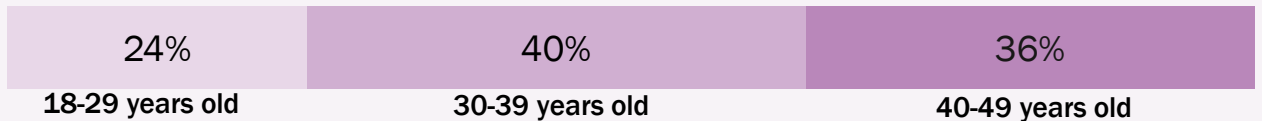


Spoke one of the
study languages

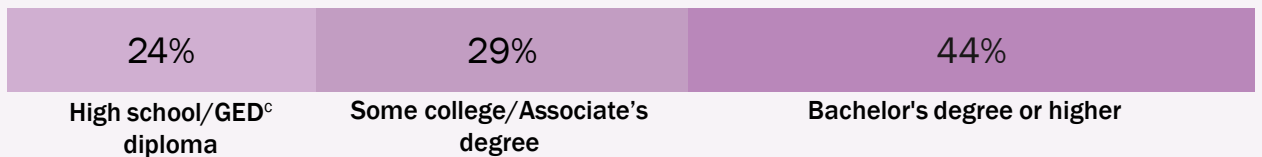
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY

252 WOMEN IN D.C.

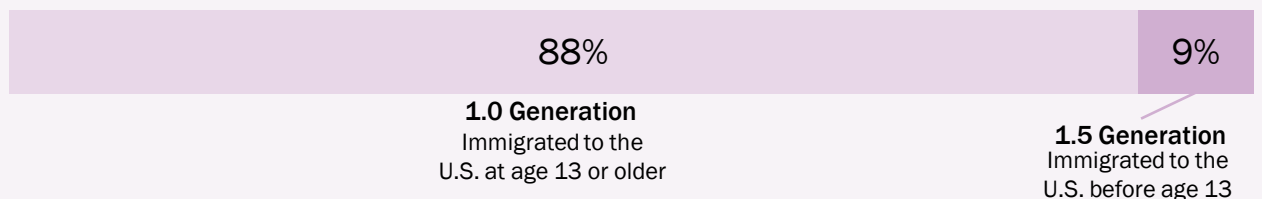
AGE GROUP



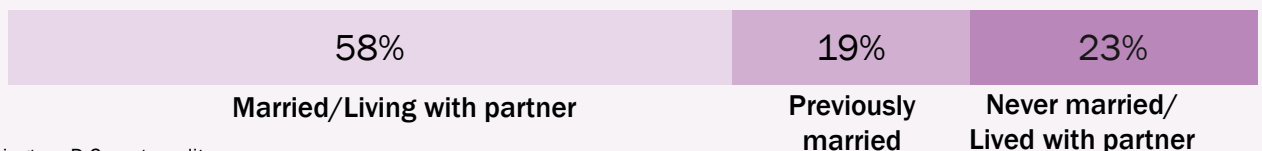
LEVEL OF EDUCATION^b



IMMIGRATION GENERATION^b



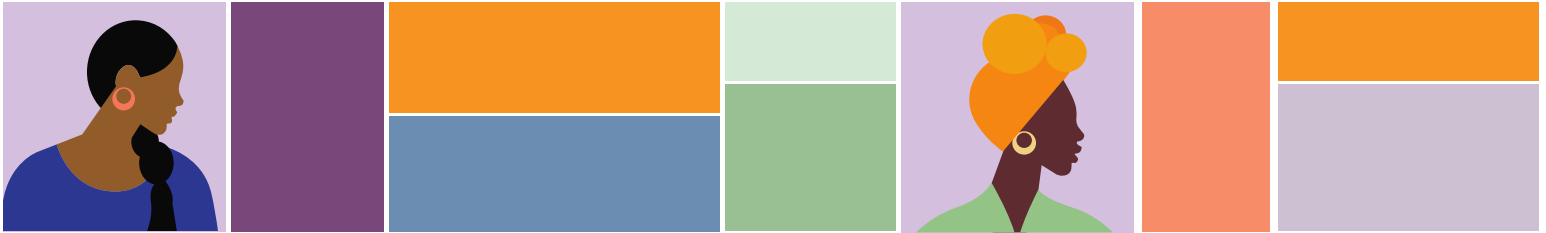
MARITAL STATUS



^a The study took place in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

^b Data for "Less than high school/GED^c diploma" and "2.0 Generation" responses are not shown due to small percentages or denominators.

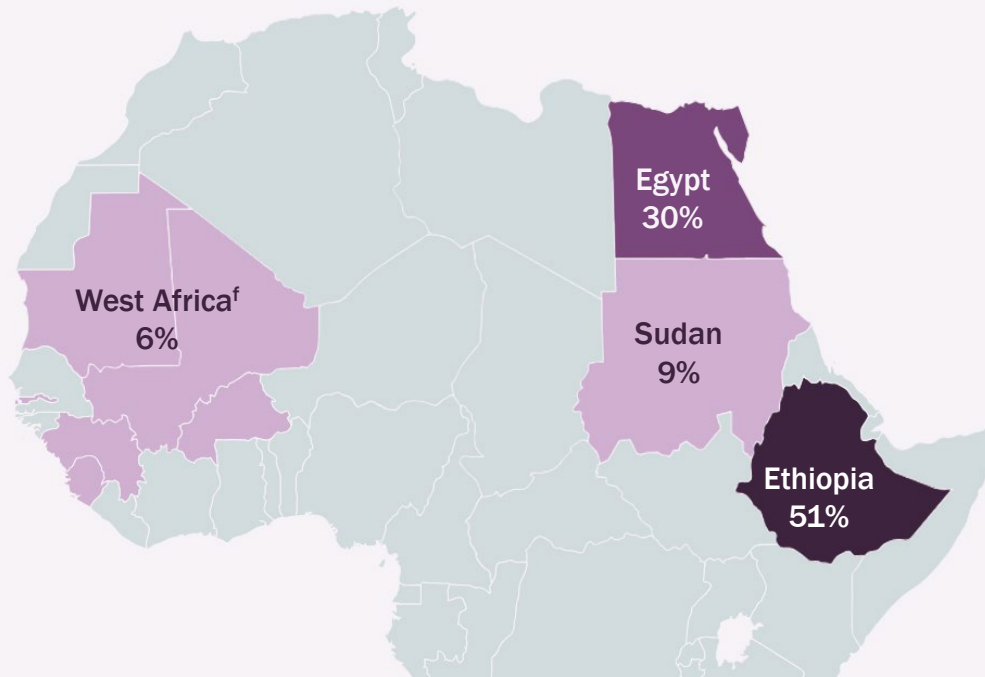
^c General Education Development



WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY

252 WOMEN IN D.C.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN ^{d, e, ^}



^d Woman's birth country or mother's birth country if woman was not born in eligible country.

^e Data for Eritrea and Somalia are not shown due to small percentages or denominators.

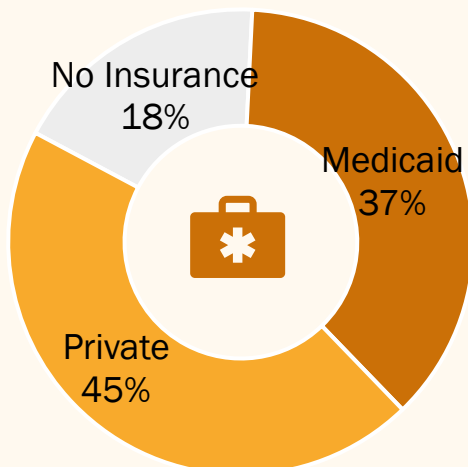
[†] West Africa includes Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, and Sierra Leone.

[^] Country of Origin Map Powered by Bing © GeoNames, Microsoft, OpenStreetMap, TomTom

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

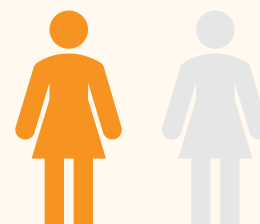
About half (45%) had private insurance.



INTERPRETER

19% prefer an interpreter when visiting their health care provider.

Among women who prefer an interpreter, over half (56%) were offered one during their last visit.



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH



78%

of women reported having had a pelvic exam or Pap smear within the last 3 years; 18% never had an exam.[§]

[§] Data for "4 or more years ago" responses are not shown due to small percentages or denominators.



51%

of women reported having ever used birth control. 30% of women used birth control in the last 30 days.



55%

of women who had a child reported ever having a C-section. 47% of births were delivered by C-section.



10%

of women who reported ever having sexual intercourse were under 18 at age of first sexual intercourse; 63% were 18 to 24; and 26% were 25 or older.

FGM/C EXPERIENCE

The World Health Organization defines female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) as all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural, religious, or other non-therapeutic reasons.¹

More than 1 in 3 women reported experiencing FGM/C.

39%

experienced FGM/C.

61%

did not experience FGM/C.



¹ World Health Organization, United Nations Population Fund & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (1997). Female genital mutilation: a joint WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA statement. World Health Organization. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/41903>.

EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN WITH FGM/C

BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



The percentage of women from each country of origin who reported experiencing FGM/C^h:

- **Sudan: 64%**
- **Eritrea: 58%**
- **Egypt: 35%**
- **Ethiopia: 29%**

^h Data for Somalia and West African countries are not shown due to small percentages or denominators.

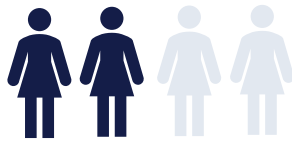
BY AGE

Women With FGM/C Within Age Groups

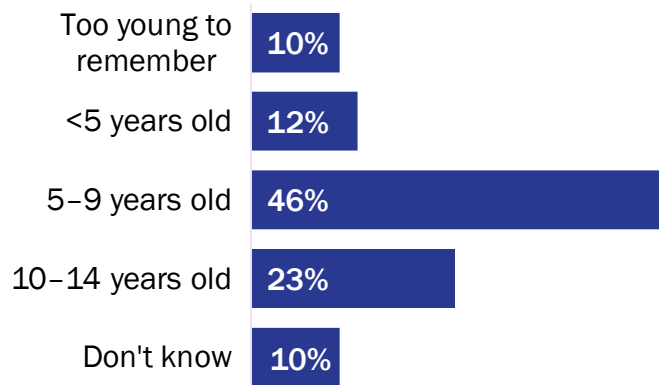
Fewer than 1 in 10 (7%) of women ages 18-24 have experienced FGM/C.



Over half (52%) of women ages 40-49 have experienced FGM/C.

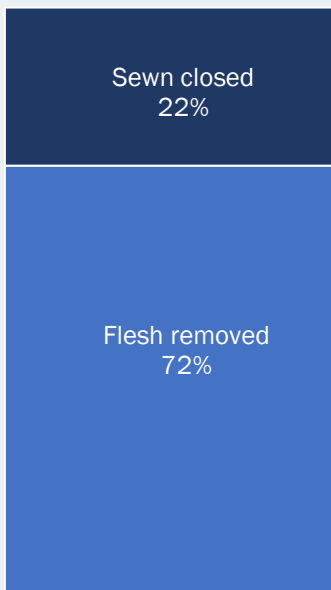


Age at FGM/C Among Women With FGM/Cⁱ



ⁱ Data for "≥15 years old" responses are not shown due to small percentages or denominators.

BY TYPE OF FGM/C^j



- **22% said their genital area was sewn closed.**
- **72% said flesh was removed from their genital area.**

^j Data for "Cut, no flesh removed" and "Don't know" responses are not shown due to small percentages or denominators.

HEALTH CONCERNS OF WOMEN WITH FGM/C



46% reported a **problem with childbirth** compared to 23% of women without FGM/C. This includes postpartum bleeding, extensive vaginal tears from childbirth, or emergency C-section.



41% reported a **reproductive health problem** compared to 19% of women without FGM/C. This includes difficulty passing period blood, difficulty passing urine, pain with urination, or many urinary tract infections.

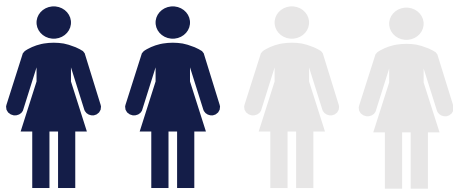


51% reported a **sexual health problem** compared to 18% of women without FGM/C. This includes pain or bleeding during sex.

31% reported **feeling sad** for many weeks at a time compared to 26% of women without FGM/C.

COMFORT OF WOMEN WITH FGM/C IN TALKING TO PROVIDER

47% would feel comfortable discussing their FGM/C with a health care provider.



25% have discussed their FGM/C with a health care provider.



FGM/C ATTITUDES

95% believe FGM/C should be stopped.

80% believe FGM/C can cause health problems later in life.

96% do not believe FGM/C is required by religion.



Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Frequencies in the study population are presented as unweighted counts and weighted percentages. Estimates less than 5% or with a denominator of 30 or fewer women are suppressed and represented by an asterisk (*).

Funding of WHNS was provided by the Centers for Disease Control, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health, and the Department of Justice, National Institute for Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. For more information, see <https://www.norc.org/research/projects/a-study-of-womens-health-needs-in-the-us.html>.