



World Health
Organization

FEMALE GENITAL **SCHISTOSOMIASIS**

A POCKET ATLAS FOR CLINICAL HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONALS



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© J. Starkey
Girls carrying out their daily activities in a natural water body in an area endemic for schistosomiasis

INTRODUCTION

Human schistosomiasis remains an important public health problem in many tropical settings. At least 261 million people require treatment for schistosomiasis and up to 659 million people are at risk.

Female genital schistosomiasis (FGS) is a manifestation mainly of *Schistosoma haematobium* infection. Given the nature of the signs and symptoms of FGS, women tend to approach health services with complaints of infertility or symptoms of sexually transmitted infections. Clinicians are generally unaware of FGS because it is not described in the medical textbooks or nursing curricula in any of the countries where schistosomiasis is endemic. Laboratory diagnostics are inadequate. Consequently, for women of reproductive age living in areas endemic for *S. haematobium*, FGS remains highly prevalent and under-diagnosed due a low index of suspicion among health-care professionals. A high index of suspicion will allow a diagnosis of FGS pre-operatively and avoid unnecessary radical surgery and misdiagnosis of sexually transmitted infections.

This *Female Genital Schistosomiasis Pocket Atlas* has been developed as a visual aid to raise awareness of the infection and to facilitate clinical diagnosis by clinical health-care professionals working in low-resource settings, especially in rural areas where schistosomiasis is endemic.

on of schistosomiasis (bilharziasis, a worm infection) caused by
al tissues.

without urinary schistosomiasis.

common gynaecological condition in schistosomiasis-endemic

used in most cases.

at a risk of HIV and human papillomavirus infections.

spread in Africa in rural and urban areas.

contact with infested fresh water.

which are deposited in the organs and some eggs are excreted.

antel aims to kill the adult worms and prevent new FGS lesions.