

Female Genital Mutilation Reconstruction: Surgical Technique

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Aim

- to describe a technique of clitoral and labial reconstruction for female genital mutilation (FGM) Types II and III refined over years of experience by the senior author

Background

- an estimated 200 million women and girls are affected by FGM worldwide¹
- incidence is increasing in the US with increasing immigrant populations²
- there is limited access and literature about FGM reconstruction³

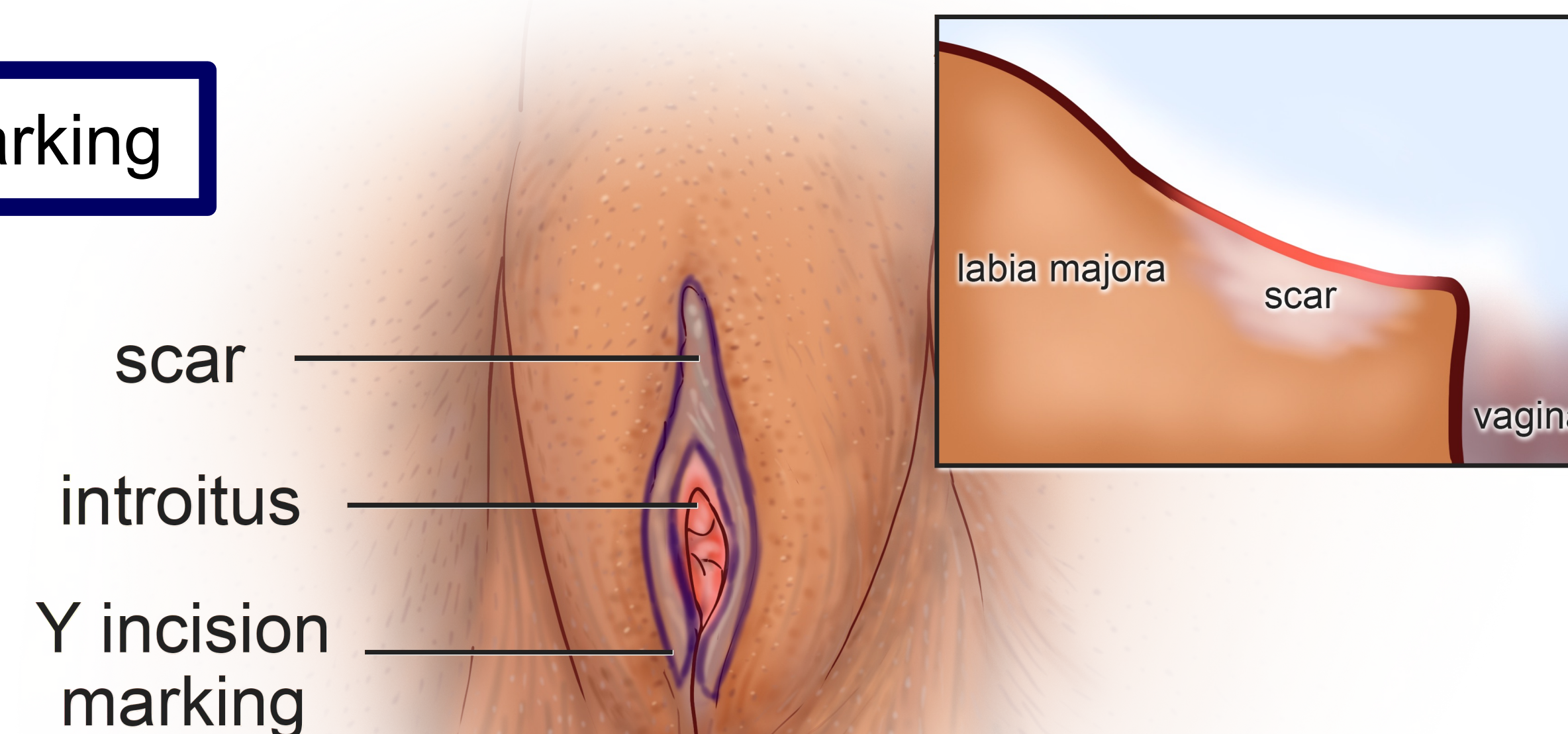
Methods

- from September 2016 to present, the following technique has been practiced for FGM repair at our institution

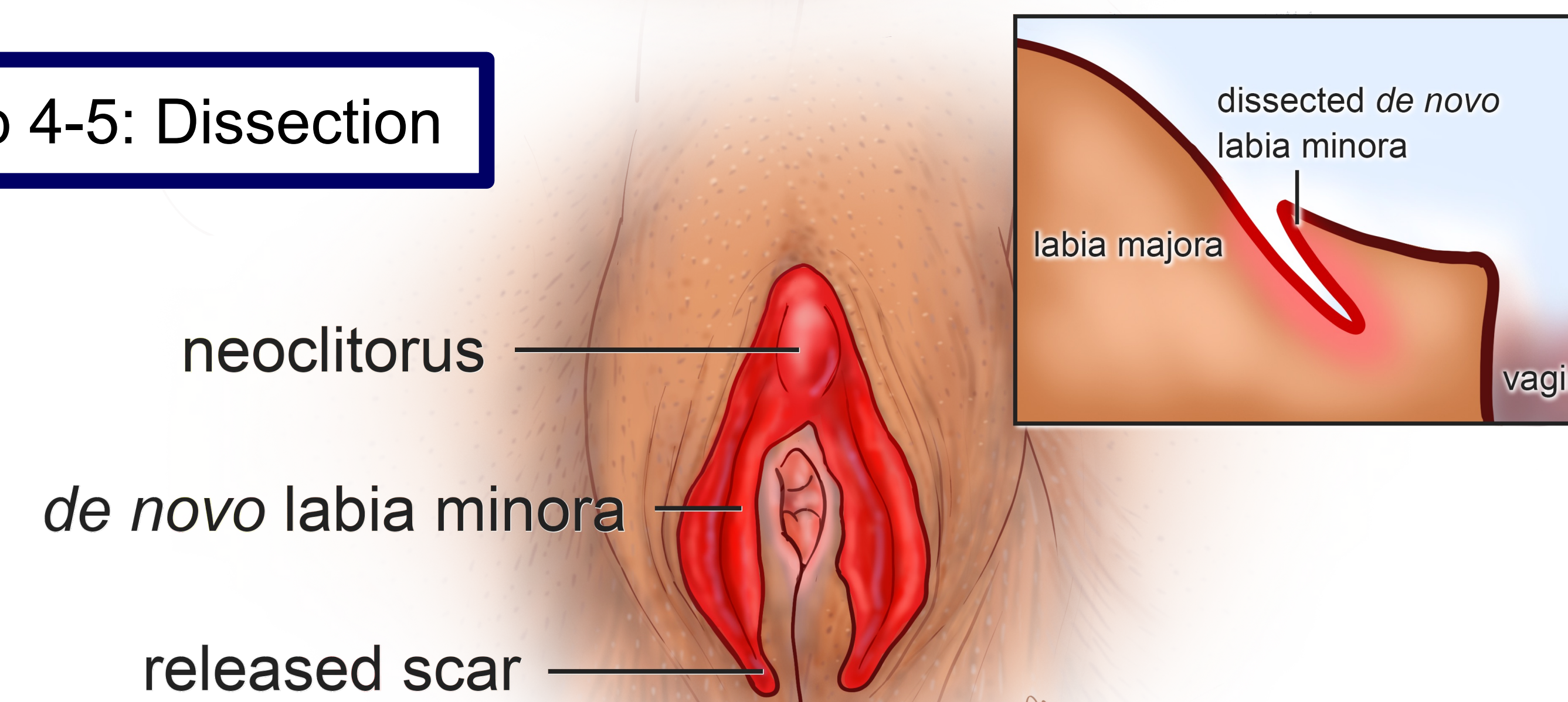
Steps:

- harvest buccal mucosa graft
- harvest and process suprapubic and abdominal fat
- design an inverted-Y incision encompassing the scar
- excise scar and release clitoral remnant
- raise medially-based *de novo* labia minora flaps
- imbricate medial labia majora to create labial sulcus
- place buccal graft to lateral side of *de novo* labia minora flaps and bolster with Doyle splints (removed 1 week postoperatively)
- structural fat grafting

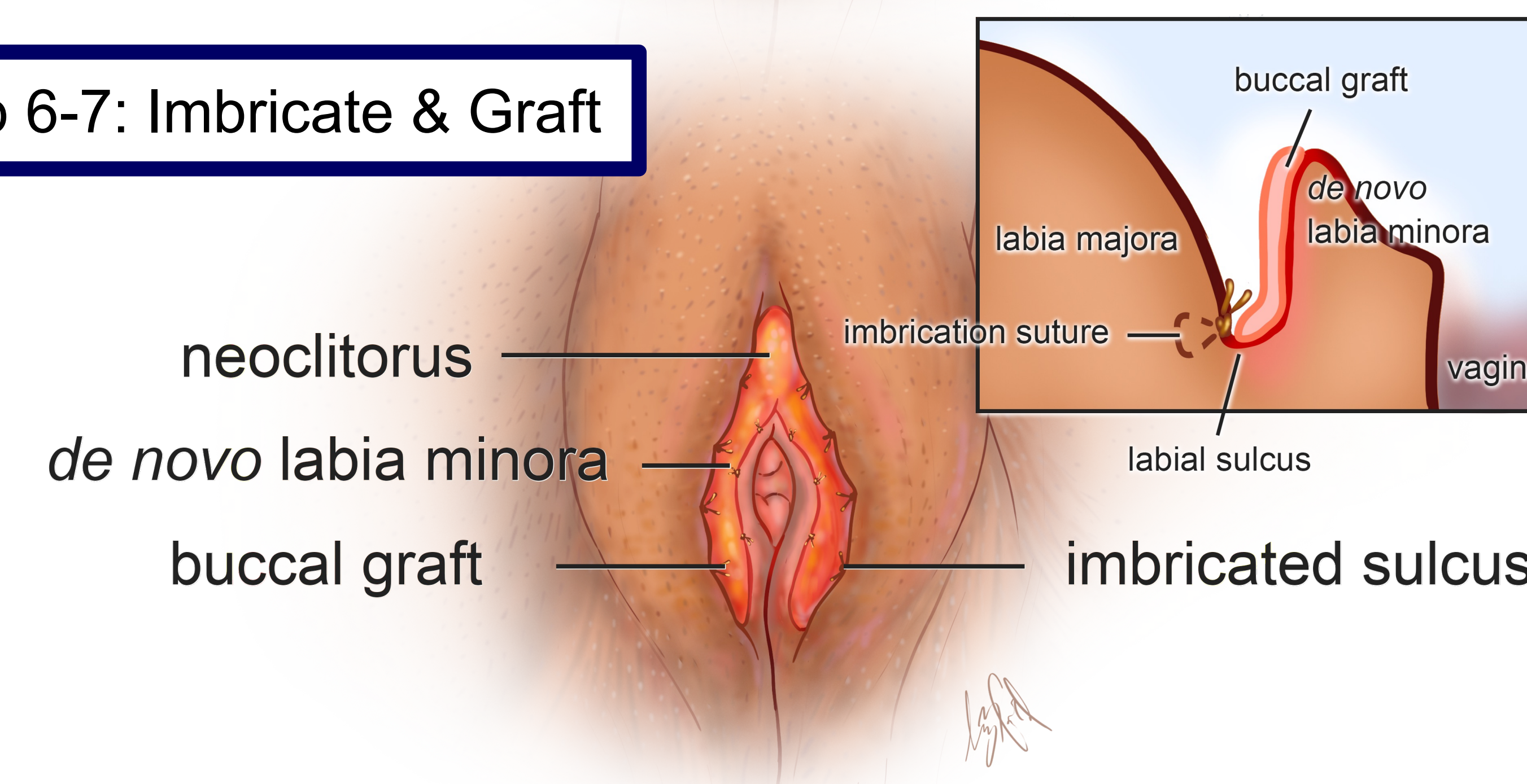
Step 3: Marking



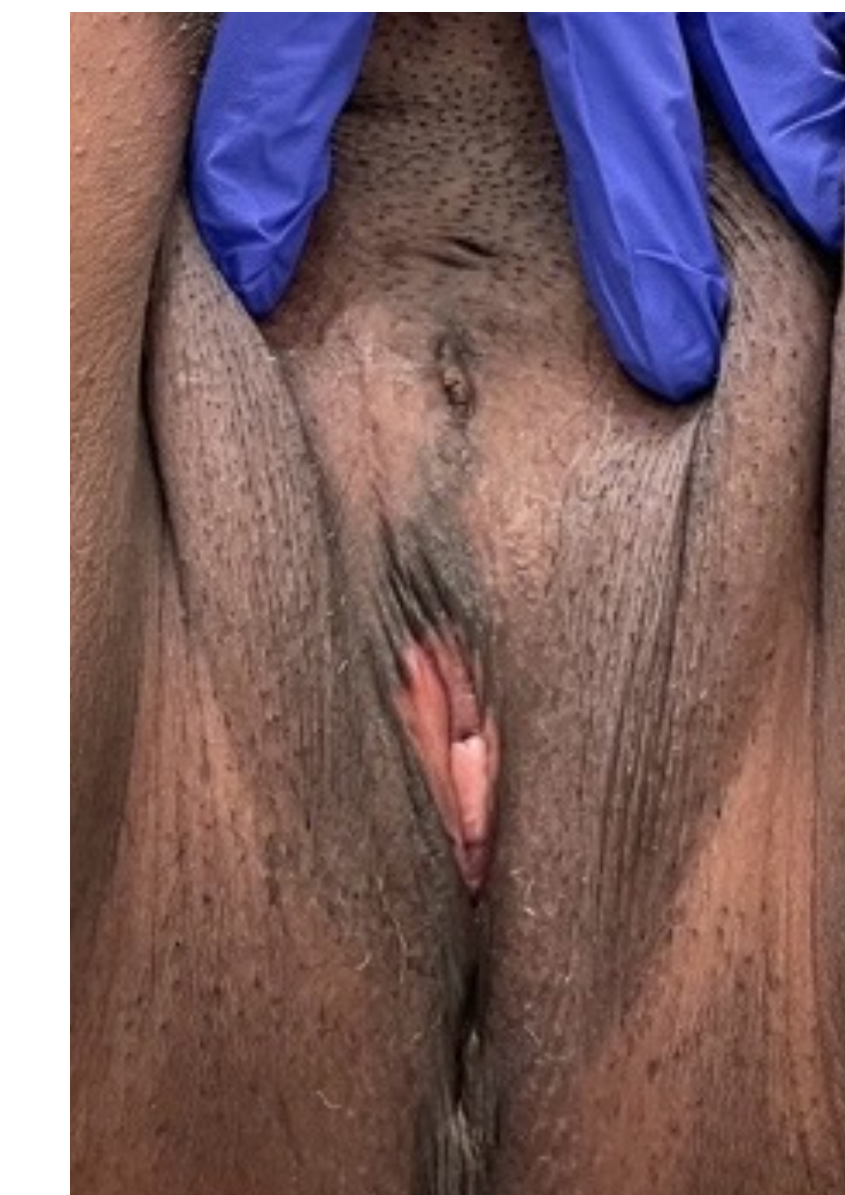
Step 4-5: Dissection



Step 6-7: Imbricate & Graft



Type II
defect
pre-op



3 weeks post-op:
viable healthy
mucosal grafts,
intact sensation
over clitoral
remnant,
pigmentation
returning

Results

- we found an excellent improvement in contour, release of scar tissue, and labia minora reconstruction with a low complication rate
- post-operatively, patients have experienced a return in natural pigmentation, clitoral sensation, and sexual function

Conclusion

- here is a straightforward, effective approach that reconstructs lost tissue while improving the physical, sexual, and psychological health of FGM survivors

References

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Statistics - UNICEF Data. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/female-genital-mutilation/> #. Accessed 30 July 2023
- Goldberg H, Stupp P, Okoroh E et al (2016) Female genital mutilation/cutting in the United States: Updated estimates of women and girls at risk, 2012. Public Health Rep 131:340-347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003335491613100218> - DOI - PubMed - PMC
- Christopher AN, Othman S, Morris MP, Broach RB, Percec I. Clinical and Patient-Reported Outcomes of 19 Patients Undergoing Clitoral and Labial Reconstruction After Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. Aesthetic Plast Surg. 2022;46(1):468-477. doi:10.1007/s00266-021-02648-y

