

OS19lite Excision of a Ganglion

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



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This document will give you information about an excision of a ganglion. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a ganglion?

A ganglion is a lump under your skin that contains fluid.

Most ganglions form near the wrist (see figure 1). They are also found on your ankle and foot. The fluid in the ganglion comes from a joint or tendon through a narrow channel.

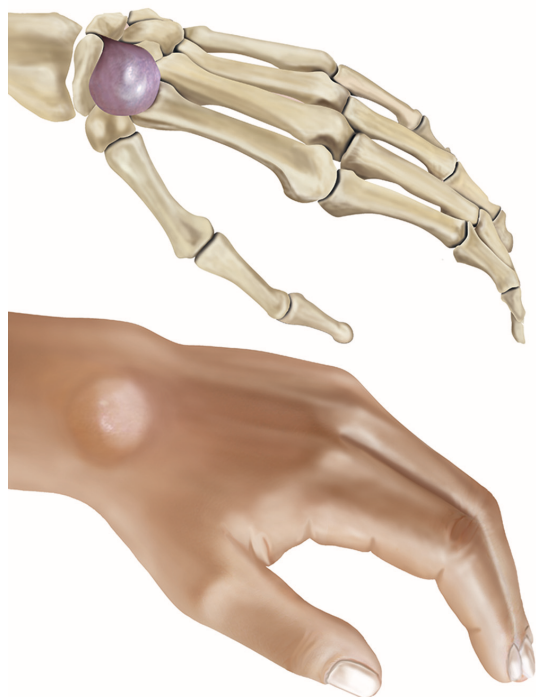


Figure 1
A ganglion on a wrist

What are the benefits of surgery?

The lump and any discomfort from it should settle. Surgery gives the best chance of preventing the ganglion from coming back.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

A ganglion will often settle after a year or two. If your ganglion is not causing much trouble it is best to leave it alone.

The fluid can be taken out of the ganglion using a needle. This improves any discomfort for a while. Your doctor may also inject the ganglion with a steroid (cortisone). These treatments may help for a short time.

What does the operation involve?

Various anaesthetic techniques are possible. The operation usually takes 15 to 30 minutes.

Your surgeon will make a cut over the ganglion and separate the ganglion from the nearby tendons, nerves and blood vessels. They will remove the ganglion.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring

2 Specific complications

- Damage to an artery
- Damage to small nerves
- Continued aching where the ganglion was
- Severe pain, stiffness and loss of use of your limb (complex regional pain syndrome)

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day. Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

The joint where the ganglion was can continue to ache but any joint stiffness should settle quickly. Some ganglions come back after a few months or years.

Summary

A ganglion is not serious. If it is causing trouble, your surgeon can remove it.

Acknowledgements

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