Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Excision of Ganglion

Version number: **6**
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Excision of Ganglion

Patient Information

Ward 1 - Trauma & Orthopaedics Department

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What is a Ganglion?

A ganglion is a harmless soft tissue lump containing fluid. They usually develop under the skin, near a joint on the wrist or occasionally on the ankle or foot.

An injury can often draw the attention of the patient to a ganglion; however, the exact cause is unknown.

Treatment options

A ganglion can disappear spontaneously on its own after a year or two.

Other methods of treatment include:

- The aspiration (suction) of the fluid in the ganglion sac with a needle and syringe
- Injecting the ganglion with a steroid medication

These are short term treatments only, as the ganglion may well return.

If the ganglion is causing some discomfort and activity is affected, an operation to completely remove the ganglion may be advised.

Your doctor will discuss the treatment options with you and advise the best treatment for you.

Benefits of surgery

The main benefit is the lump will disappear and general activity should improve.

Excision of ganglion operation

The operation is usually performed as a day case so you can go home the same day as the operation. A variety of anaesthetics can be used; this will be discussed with you prior to the operation.

The surgeon will make an incision (cut) near to the ganglion. Tendons, nerves and blood vessels will be moved to one side so the ganglion can be seen and removed safely. The skin incision will be closed using stitches and a dressing will be applied.

After the operation

Following the operation you will spend a short time in the recovery area of the operating theatre. You will then be taken back to the ward.

You may experience some discomfort in your limb following the operation; painkillers will be given to you if necessary to relieve any pain. Following your operation your limb will be elevated either using a sling or a pillow. Elevation is also advised following discharge.

Your stitches will be removed by the Practice / District Nurse or at Outpatients Department in 10 to 14 days following your operation. You will be given more information about this before you go home.

Complications

As with all operations complications can occur, these can be minor or in rare cases serious and life threatening.

Specific complications for this operation include:

- Reoccurrence of the ganglion
- Damage to nerves which could cause numbness around the area of the operation
- Damage to blood vessel which may require further surgery

General complications of surgery include:

- Excessive bleeding
- Infection in the operation area
- Sensitive scar tissue formation around the wound particularly in ganglia around the volar aspect of the wrist and forearm.

The doctor will discuss with you the risks involved to you with your operation.

If you are unsure of the risks involved with the operation or any part of your care, please do not hesitate to discuss with a member of the health care team.

Contact telephone numbers

01257 256541 / 256550 / 256551	Ward 1, Wrightington Hospital
01257 256269	Ward D, Wrightington Hospital



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