

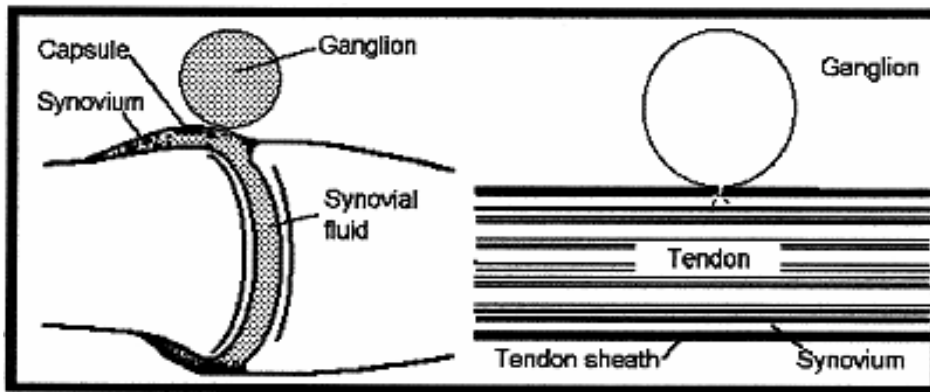
Ganglion Surgery

Introduction

A ganglion is a bag of fluid that is connected to either a joint (e.g. wrist) or the tunnel that surrounds the finger tendons. This occurs at a small area of weakness in the lining of the joint/tendon.

It is only rarely obligatory to remove a ganglion, for example if it is pressing on a nerve. The majority can be left alone if they are causing no pain or functional problems. They can sometimes disappear by themselves.

Correction involves removal of both the ganglion and the weakened area.



The ganglion can be removed under local or general anaesthetic. Those on the front of the wrist usually requires either a general anaesthetic (asleep) or a regional anaesthetic (whole arm numb) because the surgery is more complex.

Post-Operative Care

Wrist and hand ganglion - You will be discharged with a bulky dressing, consisting of gauze, wool and a crepe bandage. You will remove the entire dressing after 48 hours and inspect the wound.

Finger ganglion - You will be discharged with a light finger dressing. You will removed this after 48 hours.

All ganglions - Hand and finger movements should be continued and you should perform normal light activities after the operation. There obviously will be some swelling and bruising. Look out for any redness or tenderness in the area around the wound which might indicate an infection. Do not apply antiseptic. Please contact my secretary if you have any worries.

You can drive a car after 1 week after surgery, as long as you are comfortable and have regained full finger movements. Timing of your return to work is variable

according to your occupation and you should discuss this. Your stitches will be removed about 2 weeks after the operation.

Complications

- **Infection** - Any operation can be followed by infection and this would be treated with antibiotics.
- **Scar** - You will have a scar that will be somewhat firm to touch and tender for 6-8 weeks. This can be helped by massaging the area firmly with the moisturising cream.
- **Stiffness** - This can occur if the hand is not exercised after the operation. About 5% (1 in 20) of people are sensitive to hand surgery and their hand may become swollen, painful and stiff after any operation (reflex sympathetic dystrophy). This problem cannot be predicted but will be watched for afterwards and treated with physiotherapy.
- **Recurrence** - Up to 10% (1 in 10) of ganglions return after being removed.
- **Nerve** - Nerve damage can occur during your surgery which results in either a painful spot in the scar (neuroma) or some loss of feeling in the hand. This complication is very rare but may require a further operation to correct.
- **Artery** - Ganglions on the front of the wrist are often very close to major arteries. Damage to the arteries is very rare and can be immediately repaired.
- **Nail** - Ganglions on the tip of the finger often cause a groove in the nail. It usually settles after the operation but occasionally it can persist after or result from the surgery.