

Excision of Ganglion

This leaflet gives information for patients and their families who are undergoing an Excision of Ganglion operation. It is intended to be used as a guideline only. Please check with your surgeon for more specific information.

Pre-operative preparation

You will be asked to attend the pre-admission assessment clinic 1-6 weeks prior to admission to ensure you are fit for surgery. You will be seen in the pre-admission clinic by the nurse for any necessary pre-operative tests, which may include; blood tests, cardiogram (ECG). If you are unlikely to require any pre-operative tests your assessment may be carried out by telephone.

You will be admitted on the day of surgery unless there are any medical reasons which may require you to be admitted the day before the operation.

What is a Ganglion?

A Ganglion is a fluid filled sac which is usually attached to a joint or tendon.

The Operation

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. It may also be performed under a regional anaesthetic – where only your affected limb is anaesthetised with an injection of local anaesthetic into either your armpit or neck.

An incision is made over the ganglion. The incision will be closed with sutures.

Please remove all rings and jewellery from the hand/arm you are having the operation on. Although most patients will go home on the day of the procedure, occasionally some patients may require an overnight stay. All patients are required to bring an overnight bag.

After the Operation

You may feel some pain / discomfort after the operation. It is advised to take simple painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen which should be suitable to relieve this discomfort. Please bring these tablets with you on the day of the operation.

Your hand will be dressed with a supportive dressing but should not restrict finger movement or light hand use. Keep your affected arm elevated in the sling or on a pillow for 24 - 48 hours. Avoid lifting any heavy objects.

Gentle hand, finger and shoulder exercises will help prevent stiffness and swelling. You will need to keep your dressing dry until it is removed and the sutures removed.

Most people are able to return to driving after one week however you should discuss this with your surgeon. Please also check with your insurance company, as policies can vary.

Most people are able to return to work 1 - 2 weeks after the operation but it does depend on the type of work that you do. You should discuss with your surgeon when you are able to return to work.

What are the risk and complications?

The possible risks and complications for Ganglion Excision include;

Wound Infection – if you experience any increase in pain, redness, swelling, or develop a temperature – please see your GP as this maybe a sign of infection.

If you notice the fingers on your affected hand become a pale or blue colour, become cold to touch or if you lose any sensation or experience any tingling please contact the telephone numbers given to you in your discharge letter.

Scar – your scar will be firm to touch and tender for up to 8 weeks. This can be helped by massaging the area with unscented moisturisers e.g., E45.

Recurrence – up to 2 in 10 ganglions can return following removal.

Stiffness – if the hand is not exercised a small amount of people may need to have some physiotherapy after the operation.

Pain – wrist ganglion excision is associated with painful recovery of wrist function and can take up to 6 weeks to improve.

Blood clot - can occur after any surgical procedure and if you have had a clot or thrombosis before please make staff aware so that your risks can be assessed and managed. Please read the information you are given about reducing your risk after your operation.

Follow – up

You will be informed when the sutures need removing either at your local GP practice or in the outpatient clinic.

Useful contacts for further information

If you have any queries prior to the procedure, please contact the Day Procedure Unit on **01603 286008**.

For help giving up Smoking: contact Smokefree Norfolk local freephone 0800 0854 113 or www.smokefreenorfolk@nhs.uk or email smokefreenorfolk@nchc.nhs.uk

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