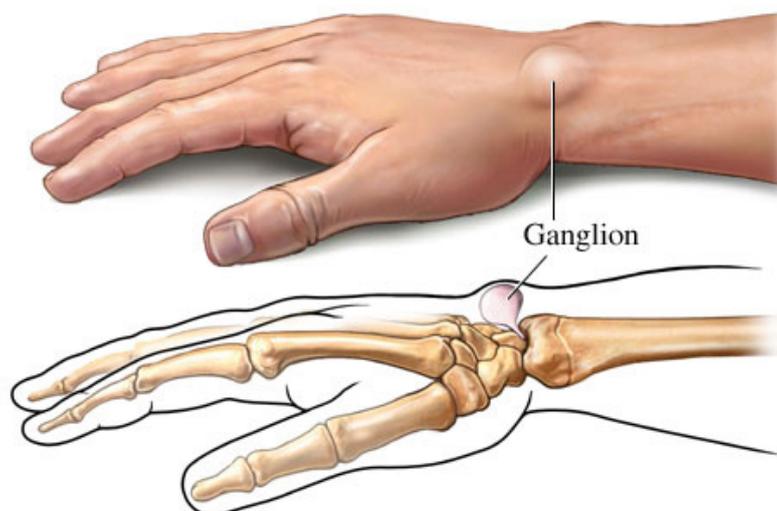# Ganglions

What is a Ganglion?

A ganglion is a small fluid filled cyst that forms a smooth lump under the skin. It is not fully understood why they form and can affect people of any age. They often form near joints and are most commonly found in the wrist or foot but can occur anywhere.

The fluid in a ganglion if similar to that which lubricates your joints although is usually a bit thicker.

What are the symptoms of a ganglion?

Swelling and the appearance of a small lump are the main symptoms of a ganglion. They are usually the size of a small pea but can become the size of a walnut. Occasionally they can be painful if they form near a nerve or if they become pinched in the joint near where they lie.

Treatment

Ganglions can resolve without any treatment but if they are painful or unsightly there are treatments that can help.

There is an "old wives tale" that suggests hitting the ganglion with a heavy book to burst it but this is **not recommende**d as you may injure surrounding structures.

Ganglions can be aspirated. A doctor uses a needle to extract the fluid from inside the ganglion, however, it is quite common for the ganglion to return as the sack the fluid was contained in is not removed.

Surgery is more successful than aspiration as it removes the sack of the ganglion as well as the fluid. It is only a small operation and is done using local anaesthetic. The ganglion is less likely to recur but 1 in 5 people will get another ganglion in the same place.

Ganglion

Help us get it right

If you have a complaint, concern, comment or compliment please let us know by speaking to a member of our staff. We learn from your feedback and use the information to improve and develop our services.

If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on **0113 220 8585**, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm or email **lch.pals@nhs.net**

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages.