

Ganglion excision – PRIOR APPROVAL

Ganglia are cystic swellings containing jelly-like fluid which form around the wrists or in the hand. In most cases wrist ganglia cause only mild symptoms which do not restrict function, and many resolve without treatment within a year. Wrist ganglion rarely press on a nerve or other structure, causing pain and reduced hand function.

Ganglia in the palm of the hand (seed ganglia) can cause pain when carrying objects.

Ganglia which form just below the nail (mucous cysts) can deform the nail bed and discharge fluid, but occasionally become infected and can result in septic arthritis of the distal finger joint.

Wrist ganglia

- no treatment unless causing pain or tingling/numbness or concern (If a clinician is worried it is a cancer, follow the 2 week cancer pathway);
- aspiration if causing pain, tingling/numbness or concern
- surgical excision only considered if aspiration fails to resolve the pain or tingling / numbness and there is restricted hand function.

Seed ganglia that are painful

- puncture/aspirate the ganglion using a hypodermic needle
- surgical excision only considered if ganglion persists or recurs after puncture / aspiration.

Mucous cysts

- no surgery considered unless recurrent spontaneous discharge of fluid or significant nail deformity.