

Treating Ganglia



A ganglion is a swelling (cyst) that forms on joint and tendon sheaths. They are most often found in the wrist. But they can also show up on the foot, fingers, or toes. Ganglia are believed to be caused by a rupture of the tissue that lines the joints and tendon sheaths (synovial tissue).

Ganglia are sometimes hard to treat without surgery. But nonsurgical methods may help ease some of your symptoms.

Nonsurgical care

Nonsurgical methods are:

- Placing pads around the ganglion, to ease pressure and friction.
- Removing the fluid, to ease symptoms. But ganglia may come back. The gelatinous gel is removed through a large-bore needle. You may get a steroid injection after the cyst fluid is removed.
- Limiting movements or activities that increase pain, to bring relief.
- Icing the ganglion for 15 to 20 minutes, to temporarily help with inflammation and pain.
- Taking medicine. If your inflammation is severe, your healthcare provider may treat your symptoms with medicine.

Surgery

If a ganglion is causing ongoing or severe pain, you may need surgery. Your surgeon removes the whole ganglion wall during the procedure. They may also remove some nearby tissue. If the ganglion has come through a tear in the capsule of the joint, the tear may have to be repaired. The joint will likely be protected while the tear heals.



After surgery

You may feel pain, swelling, numbness, or tingling for some weeks after surgery. See your healthcare provider if you notice any problems in the future. Although surgery is often successful, there is a chance that the ganglion will come back.

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