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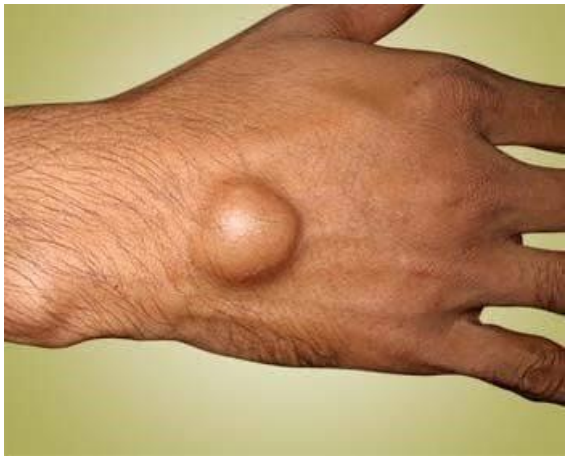
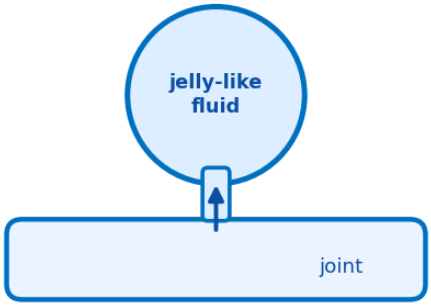
## GANGLION EXCISION

This leaflet provides general information to help you understand surgery to remove a ganglion cyst.

**This day-case procedure removes the cyst and its stalk to reduce recurrence.**

At the heart of my practice is **Shared Decision-Making**. Whether we pursue conservative management (Plan A) or surgical intervention (Plan B), the goal is to create a tailored treatment plan that aligns with your lifestyle, values, and functional goals.






*This leaflet provides general information and does not replace individual medical advice.*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- **LIPS Healthcare London**
- **Spire Alexandra Chatham**
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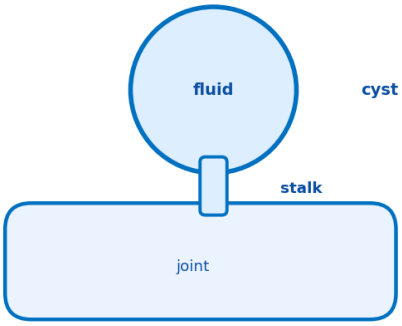
## The Anatomy of a Ganglion

A ganglion is a fluid-filled lump that arises from a joint or tendon, relying on several structures working together:

### How a Ganglion Forms

Think of it as a small balloon of fluid:

- Fluid leaks from a joint or tendon sheath
- It collects in a small sac under the skin
- A stalk connects the sac to the joint




### The Fluid

The sac contains a thick, jelly-like fluid, similar to the natural lubricant found inside your joints — it is not cancerous.

### Where They Appear

Ganglions form near joints and tendons:

- Back of the wrist (the most common)
- Palm side of the wrist
- Base of a finger, on the tendon sheath
- Often changing in size over time

### Good to Know

- They are non-cancerous and harmless
- About half disappear on their own
- They often change in size or come and go
- Pain occurs only if a nerve is pressed

### The Result

Most cause only a visible lump, but larger cysts can make it uncomfortable to bend the wrist or grip, and some press on a nearby nerve.

## About the Operation

Ganglion surgery removes the cyst and its stalk to relieve symptoms and reduce the chance of it returning. It is a minor day-case operation, recommended when the lump is painful, presses on a nerve, limits movement, or keeps coming back.

### Why It's Done

The operation aims to:

- Relieve pain and pressure from the cyst
- Restore comfortable wrist or finger movement
- Remove the stalk to lower the chance of return

### The Procedure, Step by Step

The day-case operation, step by step:

- Anaesthetic: local or general anaesthetic
- Incision: a small cut is made over the cyst
- Removal: the cyst and its stalk are taken from the joint
- Closure: stitches and a splash-proof dressing

## Before, During & After Surgery

### Before Surgery

- Fasting: no food for 6 hours, no drinks for 2 hours before
- Smoking: avoid for at least 12 hours before, to aid healing
- Medications: continue as advised by the pre-op team

### On the Day

- Admission: check in at main reception, then to your room
- Consultation: meet your surgeon and anaesthetist
- Preparation: timing and instructions are reviewed

### Anaesthesia

- A general anaesthetic is often combined with a local block
- Selected patients may have surgery awake with a block

## Recovery & Results

Recovery is a partnership. The timeline below is a guide — I will adapt it to your healing and your goals — **this shared decision-making process ensures you are fully informed and involved in your care.**

### Recovery Milestones

- Bandage: bulky dressing removed after 24–48 hours
- Hand use: gentle finger and hand use straight away
- Stitches: removed at about 14 days
- Good recovery: light use by 2 weeks, fuller by 6–8 weeks

### Results

Most patients get good relief of symptoms. About 1 in 10 ganglions return, usually needing only observation, and removing the stalk lowers this risk.

### After Surgery

*The first weeks*

**Wound Care:** keep the wound clean and dry; the bulky bandage comes off at 24–48 hours

**Pain Relief:** start painkillers before the block wears off and take regularly for 24–48 hours

**Stitches:** usually removed at about 14 days

**Scar Care:** gentle scar massage with cream 2–3 times daily for 2–3 months

### Risks & Complications

*Uncommon, but possible*

**Infection:** rare; usually settles with dressings and antibiotics

**Scar Sensitivity:** tenderness can last 2–3 months; massage with cream helps

**Recurrence:** about 1 in 10 return, usually managed by observation

**CRPS:** mild in about 1 in 10; a severe form is rare (about 2%)

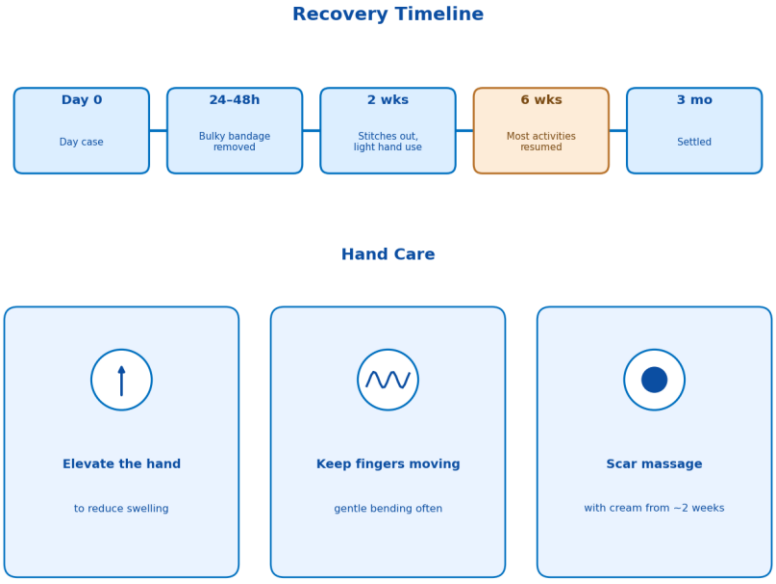
**Wrist Stiffness:** the joint lining can scar and stiffen a little

## Return to Activity:

**This can be extremely variable and discuss with the surgeon. These are just guidelines.**

Desk work **2–3 weeks**; driving when you can safely do an emergency stop, often **1–2 weeks**; light manual work 6–8 weeks; heavy manual work 12–16 weeks; avoid heavy lifting for 6–8 weeks.

## *Recovery Timeline & Hand Care*




### *Red Flags — When to Seek Urgent Help*

**Spreading redness, discharge or increasing pain in the wound, or fever — seek urgent assessment, as this may indicate infection.**
**If you experience any of the above, contact the practice, your GP, NHS 111, or attend your nearest Emergency Department.**

### *Key Points to Remember*

- **A minor day-case operation**
- **Removing the stalk lowers recurrence**
- **About 1 in 10 can return**
- **Gentle scar massage helps the scar settle**

### *Questions You May Wish to Ask*

- **When can I use my hand normally again?**
- **When can I drive and return to work?**
- **How much improvement can I expect?**
- **What are the signs of a problem?**

### *Book or Enquire Directly at Each Site*

- **LIPS Healthcare London** ☎ 020 7164 6114
- **Spire Alexandra Chatham** ☎ 01634 687166
- **Practice Plus Gillingham** ☎ 0333 200 4055