

FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



GANGLION CYST

A ganglion cyst is a firm or spongy, fluid-filled lump that grows from the lining of a joint. It commonly grows on the back or front of the wrist or at the base of a finger. A ganglion cyst can be as small as a pea to the size of a peach stone. It is not unusual for it to change in size depending on how much the joint is moved during the day. In the past, the cyst was called a "Bible Bump" because treatment sometimes involved using a heavy book to smash the cyst.

CAUSES

The exact cause of a ganglion cyst is unknown, but may be from trauma or damage from repetitive use. Another explanation involves an irritation in the joint or tendon that allows the joint tissue and joint fluid to balloon out from the joint and form a cyst.

SYMPTOMS

The ganglion cyst usually appears as a bump that changes size. The cyst may appear over time or appear suddenly. It may get smaller in size and even go away and come back at another time. A small ganglion cyst is usually painless; however, as it gets larger, it can push on other soft tissues and cause pain. A ganglion cyst at the wrist often sticks out when the wrist is bent. Pain often increases when the wrist is used to push up from a surface, such as doing pushups or pushing up from a chair.

TREATMENT

Many ganglion cysts will go away without any invasive treatment and conservative management involves wearing an orthosis to immobilise the joint until the symptoms improve. A doctor may remove the fluid with a needle, and can also give an injection such as cortisone to relieve the pain. If the joint is painful and the cyst comes back, the doctor may choose to perform surgery to remove the cyst.



HOW CAN WE HELP?

We will consider what type of splinting or orthosis will best suit your lifestyle and help determine which activities should be avoided. Splinting will assist in managing the symptoms and reducing your pain by limiting joint motion. If surgery is performed, treatment will include exercises to restore the range of motion, strength and function of the hand. Other treatments may also be used to help manage pain and scarring.