



Buckinghamshire Hand Surgeon

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Lumps and bumps information sheet

What are they?

Lumps and bumps in the hand are very common. They can cause pain, stiffness and cosmetic problems for patients. Thankfully, cancers in the hand are very rare and as such, the vast majority of these lesions are not dangerous and are easily treated.

What causes them?

Most lesions in the hand have no known cause, some are caused by overgrowth of normal tissues and some may be precipitated by injury or trauma.

What are the symptoms?

Most patients present with symptoms of pain, stiffness and an unsightly lump or bump. Occasionally the lesion may be pressing on a nerve and this may cause tingling or "electric shock" sensations in the hand and fingers. Sometimes the lesions may become infected, causing redness, pain and occasionally discharge.

Do I need any further investigations?

In general, most lesions in the hand are easily diagnosed clinically. In difficult cases ultrasound scan or MRI is required to confirm diagnosis or help Andy define the structures that are involved.

What is the treatment?

Depending on the location and nature of the lesion, they are generally removed surgically, either under local or general anaesthetic, as a day case procedure. The tissue removed is sent to the laboratory to confirm the diagnosis.

How long will it take to recover?

Recovery from surgery generally takes 1-2 weeks, depending on the nature, location and size of the lesion removed.

A bandage/ dressing will be applied to the hand after the operation. You will be seen by a hand therapist at 2 days who will remove this, clean and redress the wounds for you. The hand therapist will get you moving your hand very early after surgery to avoid stiffness.

The stiches are removed at around 10 days and Andy will review you at 2 weeks with the laboratory results.

Following your 2 week appointment your hand therapist will get you moving your hand more and more and will also advise how to help soften and desensitize the scars.

What are the potential complications?

- **Infection** - Uncommon and usually treated very successfully with antibiotics.
- **Delayed healing**- Smokers and those with diabetes are more prone to this.
- **Recurrence**- depending on the location of the ganglion, literature quotes a recurrence rate of around 15-20%. Mr. Hacker will discuss this with you at the time of your consultation.
- **Painful/ Tender Scars**- the vast majority of patients complain of some discomfort around the scar and thumb, this is know as pillar pain and generally resolves with time. Rigorous wound care and desensitization as directed by your hand therapist help prevent this.
- **Damage to surrounding structures**- inadvertent damage or stretching to surrounding nerves may cause some numbness around the scars, although this should improve with time.
- **Stiffness**- Operations to the hand cause stiffness; this can be minimized by working closely with your hand therapist.
- **CRPS**- An uncommon but potentially serious complication of hand surgery leading to pain, stiffness, swelling and discomfort. It is impossible to predict this problem but working closely with you hand therapist and getting your hand moving early has been proven to significantly reduce the risk of this.

When can I get back to normal activities?

The hand **MUST** be kept clean and dry for **10 days** until the sutures are removed. You should be able to return to “desk job” type activities within a **few days** of the operation. **Any manual work, heavy lifting or sporting activities** should be avoided for at least **3-4 weeks**.

You may return to **driving** in about **a week**.

Please inform your insurance company that you have recent hand surgery to ensure that are happy for you to do so.

