

Paediatric Ganglion

This leaflet provides information about a ganglion of the wrist or hand. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your child's care.

What is ganglion and why has my child got it?

A ganglion is a harmless swelling on the hand or wrist that contains a thick jelly-like substance called synovial fluid. This fluid lubricates the bones at a joint to allow pain free movement.

It is unclear as to why a ganglion develops and they can just happen for no reason or it can be because of a bang or knock to the area causing minor trauma that allows the fluid from the joint to bulge out.

What are the signs and symptoms?

There are three common locations for a ganglion to develop, the back and front of the wrist and the base of the fingers. A ganglion is usually a smooth round swelling that can vary in size from a small pea sized lump to a larger plum sized one.

They are usually not painful but your child may experience some discomfort if they are doing lots of writing, during exams for example.

Does my child need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

Most ganglions are diagnosed by clinical examination but occasionally an ultrasound scan may be requested.

Does my child need to have treatment?

Most ganglions can safely be left without any long-term consequence and they will often disappear by themselves, although this may take some time (months to years).

What treatments are available?

Most ganglions will disappear given enough time without intervention.

If the ganglion is causing pain or discomfort, then aspiration of the fluid can be carried out in the outpatient department. This involves an injection of local anaesthetic into the skin and then, once the area is numb, a needle is put into the ganglion to try to draw out the fluid. This may give initial relief but a ganglion will often reoccur.

Surgical excision of the ganglion can be carried out but there is still a chance of reoccurrence. Usually, a general anaesthetic is required for the procedure but there is the option of local anaesthetic and this is something that will be discussed with you and your child in clinic. The operation is carried out as a day case and at the end of the procedure a dressing will be applied.

Prior to discharge you will be given information about caring for the wound and dressing and what follow up has been requested by the surgeon.

Useful sources of information

The British Society for Surgery of the Hand - www.bssh.ac.uk

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's ganglion, please contact the plastic surgery department on 020 8725 1134 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). Out of hours, please contact the on-call plastic surgery senior house officer via the hospital switchboard on 020 8672 1255.

You can also contact the paediatric plastic surgery clinical nurse specialist on 020 8725 2656 and leave a message on the answering machine. If your query or concern is urgent please don't leave a message but contact the on-call plastic surgery senior house officer.

For follow up appointments please contact the plastic surgery appointment desk on 020 8725 5855.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk).

The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



Reference: PLA_PGA_01 **Published:** July 2023 **Review date:** July 2025