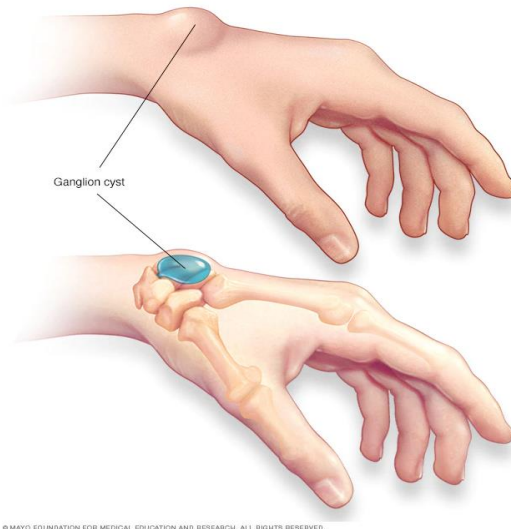




Ganglion Cysts

What are ganglion cysts?

Ganglion cysts are benign pockets of tissue filled with a jelly-like fluid that can develop around joints or tendons. They often appear like round or oval swellings. They most often occur in the hand or wrist, but can be present in the knee, ankle, shoulder, or other parts of the body. They are usually painless, but sometimes can cause pain, weakness, or difficulty in moving the involved joint if they grow large enough to compress nearby structures.



What causes ganglion cysts?

Ganglion cysts are outgrowths of the lining of joints or tendons, but we don't fully understand why they develop. They can occur when some tissue of tendons or joints herniates and fills with fluid. Ganglion cysts are not cancerous. They most commonly occur in people between 20 and 40 years of age but can occur at any age. People with osteoarthritis and/or joint and tendon injury are at higher risk of developing ganglion cysts.

How are ganglion cysts diagnosed?

Ganglion cysts are most often diagnosed by ultrasound. MRI can also be used to confirm the diagnosis.

How are ganglion cysts treated?

Over half of ganglion cysts go away on their own, often within a year. If they are causing pain or other symptoms, needle aspiration (drainage) is warranted, although the cyst may return within a year. If symptomatic cysts fail to resolve or return after aspiration, surgery may be indicated to remove the cyst definitively.