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# Ganglion Cyst Excision Experience

Dr. Ryan Karlstad, MD

# How to prepare for your Surgery

### What You Should Know about your surgery

A ganglion is a cyst which arises from a joint or tendon sheath. This may cause discomfort or tenderness at the site of the mass. Ganglion cysts are benign and may fluctuate in size. If bothersome, they can be excised in a procedure known as a Ganglion Cyst Excision.

### What are the risks of surgery?

Every surgery runs the risk of infection, wound healing problems, loss of motion, and pain. This is particularly true in diabetic patients or those who are immunocompromised. Additional risks inherent to this surgery includes the risk of ganglion recurrence. You are encouraged to ask Dr. Karlstad about your particular risks.

### What should I do before presenting for surgery?

* You may take all your normal medications the morning of your procedure. If you were told to discontinue blood thinners, please avoid these medications
* Wash your hands aggressively with soap and water to clean your hands as much as possible before presenting for your surgery.
* Remove any rings and leave them at home before presenting for your surgery. Artificial nails may be left in place. Nail polish may be left in place unless it is chipped or cracked or susceptible to coming off during surgery.
* Your surgery will be done in an operating room (i.e. hospital or surgery center). You will be required to make arrangements to have someone drive you home.
* Call Dr. Karlstad at (651) 351-2647 before leaving for surgery if any of the following are true:
  + You have an active infection anywhere on your body (e.g. skin infection, strep throat, dental infection, tooth abscess, urinary tract infection). Common colds and viral respiratory infections are OK.
  + You have considerable anxiety and feel you may benefit from the administration of an oral anti-anxiety medication (e.g. Valium)
  + You have open cuts or sores on the affected hand, wrist, or forearm.

# what will happen the day of my Ganglion Cyst Excision experience?

### What happens preoperatively?

* You will be notified by the hospital or surgery center (generally the day before your procedure) about what time to arrive
* You will be checked in the hospital or surgery center. Please bring your insurance and contact information.
* You will be accompanied to the pre-operative room where you will change into a gown and a brief medical assessment will be done. Dr. Karlstad will speak to you in the pre-operative room and will explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have. An anesthesiologist will also talk to you about anesthesia.
* You will be accompanied to the operating room where you will be placed on the operating table. Anesthesia will be provided as desired.
* Your procedure will be performed and you will awaken from anesthesia and be taken to the recovery suites.
* Dr. Karlstad will talk to you or a family member about the results of your surgery.
* Call Twin Cities Orthopedics at (651) 439-8807 to arrange a follow-up appointment with Dr. Karlstad his physician assistant 10-14 days after your surgery.

# What should I do after surgery

**The following is Dr. Karlstad’s postoperative protocol following a Ganglion Cyst Excision:**

* Leave your dressing intact for 2 days following your surgery. That is, if your surgery is on a Monday, you may begin dressing changes on Wednesday.
* You may move your fingers within the dressing and use your hand for light activities such as getting dressed, eating, typing, and grasping light objects. Avoid firm or repetitive gripping or pressure against your incision until after your follow-up appointment.
* You will be provided with a prescription for pain medication the day of your surgery. This may be filled at the pharmacy of your choice. Patients eventually wean to Tylenol or ibuprofen (Advil) as their pain subsides over the course of 1 to 3 days.
* Confirm that you have a follow-up appointment with Dr. Karlstad or his physician assistant 10-14 days postoperatively.
* **On the day after your surgery**, cover your dressing with a bag or Saran Wrap when showering to keep it dry.
* **On the second day after your surgery** before your shower, remove your dressing all the way to the tape on your skin (or stitches if they are visible). If you have tape (Steri-strips or “butterfly bandages” on your skin, leave these on until follow up. You may get your hand wet in the shower, (including the tape, if present) but do not soak your incision. It is OK for shampoo or a mild soap to touch your incision.
* After showering, apply a small gauze or Band-Aid to your incision and rewrap it gently with Coban (also known as veterinary wrap). You may purchase this at pet stores, Fleet Farm (in the veterinary section), or at pharmacies.
* Change this dressing daily (but leave the tape) every time you shower or bathe until your follow-up.
* The tape on your skin (if present instead of stitches) may start to fall off before your follow-up appointment. This is OK. Leave any remaining tape in place until your follow-up as this holds a suture beneath the skin in place. Let the tape fall off on its own. Do not pull on the tape since you may inadvertently remove the stitch.
* **At your follow-up appointment** (generally 10-14 days after surgery) your sutures will be removed.
* Notify Dr. Karlstad at (651) 351-2647 if you notice any of the following before your follow-up appointment:
  + Draining pus. Some serous (clear or yellow-tinged) fluid drainage is normal for a couple days after surgery.
  + Spreading redness around your incision.
  + A sudden increase in pain in your hand
  + If your incision splits open.