

Ganglion Cysts

Diagnosis Explanation:

A **ganglion cyst** is a **fluid-filled lump** that develops along **tendons or joints**, commonly found on the **wrist, hand, or fingers**. These cysts form when **synovial fluid leaks out** of a joint or tendon sheath and **collects in a sac**. They can vary in size, may appear suddenly or gradually, and can change over time.

Symptoms:

- **Visible lump** near a joint or tendon (usually on the wrist or hand).
- **Mild to moderate pain** if the cyst presses on a nerve.
- **Tingling, numbness, or weakness** in the affected area.
- **Fluctuating size**, often increasing with activity and decreasing with rest.

Specific Work Modifications:

- **If your job involves typing or writing:** Use an **ergonomic keyboard and wrist support**, and take **frequent breaks**.
- **If your job requires manual labor:** Avoid **repetitive wrist or hand movements** that may aggravate the cyst.
- **If your job is desk-based:** Keep wrists **neutral**, adjust your desk height, and avoid resting directly on the cyst.
- **Avoid:** Prolonged wrist flexion/extension, forceful gripping, and repetitive strain on the affected joint.

Specific Activity Modifications:

- **If you play an instrument or do crafting:** Modify technique and use **larger-handled tools** to reduce strain.
- **If you play sports:** Avoid **racket sports, weightlifting, and repetitive wrist motions** that may increase pressure on the cyst.
- **If you do yoga or Pilates:** Modify wrist-bearing poses (e.g., plank, downward dog) to reduce joint stress.
- **Avoid:** Excessive wrist bending, prolonged gripping, and impact activities.

Recommended Supplements:

- **Collagen Peptides** - 10g daily for joint and connective tissue support.
- **Vitamin B6** - 50-100mg daily to support nerve health if the cyst is compressing a nerve.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** - 1000mg daily to reduce inflammation.
- **Turmeric (Curcumin)** - 500-1000mg daily for natural anti-inflammatory benefits.

- **Magnesium** - 300-400mg daily to support muscle relaxation and joint health.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration:

- **Increase Lean Protein** (chicken, fish, tofu, eggs) to support connective tissue health.
- **Eat Anti-Inflammatory Foods** (berries, leafy greens, turmeric, nuts) to reduce swelling.
- **Consume Hydrating Foods** (cucumber, watermelon, citrus) to maintain joint lubrication.
- **Limit Processed Foods & Sugars** to prevent inflammation.
- **Hydration:** Drink **8-10 cups of water daily** to support joint and tissue hydration.

Home Exercise Prescription (Rehabilitation for Ganglion Cysts)

Early Phase (0-2 Weeks, Reducing Pain & Preventing Growth):

- **RICE Protocol** - Rest, Ice (15-20 min, 3x/day), Compression, Elevation.
- **Gentle Wrist Stretching** - Extend the arm, pull the wrist back gently, hold **20 seconds, 3x/day**.
- **Finger Flexor Stretch** - Gently bend fingers back, hold **15 seconds, 3x/day**.

Strengthening Phase (2-6 Weeks, Improving Joint Stability & Function):

- **Wrist Extension (Light Resistance Band)** - Hold a light weight or band, extend the wrist upward, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Wrist Flexion (Light Resistance Band)** - Hold a weight, bend wrist down, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Grip Strengthening (Soft Ball Squeeze)** - Squeeze a soft ball **5 seconds, repeat 10 reps, 2x/day**.

Advanced Phase (6+ Weeks, Preventing Recurrence & Maintaining Function):

- **Wrist Circles** - Slowly rotate wrists in both directions, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Forearm Pronation/Supination (Light Resistance)** - Rotate forearm palm-up and palm-down, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Thumb Opposition Drill** - Touch thumb to each fingertip, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Helpful Books:

1. *The Hand and Wrist Pain Solution: Simple Exercises for Relief* - Dr. Ross Clifford.
2. *Arthritis and Hand Therapy: A Self-Help Guide to Managing Joint Pain* - Susan J. Barnhart, PT.

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.