

Excision of a lump from finger, hand or wrist.

This leaflet contains information about the procedure of the surgical removal of a lump from a finger hand or wrist. It explains a little about what will happen before, during and after your operation and tries to answer some of the questions you may have.

The removal of a lump is necessary when it interferes with movement, is painful and to confirm the diagnosis of the lump.

Most lumps are not serious some are a result of inflammatory conditions e.g. Rheumatoid arthritis, soft tissue injuries, wear and tear of a joint. Others can appear for no obvious reason.

Some can recur even after they have been removed entirely.

What are the risks in having the surgery?

- Bleeding and / or bruising, which will clear over time. **NB if you are taking medication to 'thin the blood' you need advice regarding on the need to stop this medication prior to surgery. It may be necessary to stop your medication for as much as 10 days.**
- Wound infection .You will be given instructions from the nursing staff on how to minimise these risks before you go home.
- Depending on the site of the operation there could be a risk of nerve and blood vessel damage
- The lump may come back; it may be necessary to repeat the surgery.
- Swelling around the operation site could take some time to settle.
- Permanent stiffness of a joint, if the lump comes from the joint, which could lead to some restriction of movement.
- Sensitivity of the scar can occur this may be due to a neuroma formation.
- If the surgery is close to the joint at the end of your finger, the surgery may have to be done very close to the area that the fingernail grows from (the nail plate). There is a risk that the operation could result in a distortion of nail growth this could be permanent. Distortion may have already occurred because of the presence of the lump.

What happens during the operation?

At the start of this operation a tourniquet is placed around your arm/finger to reduce the blood supply to the area the doctors want to operate on, this can be placed at the top of your upper arm or your wrist or a small tourniquet could be placed at the base of the finger. The tourniquet is very tight but due to your anaesthetic you should not feel it, it is necessary for the operation to reduce the blood flow to the hand/finger.

Your skin will be washed with an antiseptic lotion and your arm will then be draped in sterile sheets to give the surgeon a very clean area to work in.

The area is prepared by making a cut in the skin over or around the lump; the surgeon then removes the lump. If the lump is made up of bone the surgeon may use an electric saw, this can be noisy you may feel vibration from the saw but you should not feel pain.

The wound is then stitched, you may then be given some local anaesthetic to help with pain relief after the surgery and a dressing is applied. At this point the tourniquet is removed.

What are the benefits of surgery?

Removal of the lump and this will give a definite diagnosis as most lumps are sent to the laboratory to be looked at under a microscope to determine what material they consist of. Occasionally it is not necessary to do this as it is obvious to the doctor what the lump is.
You will be exchanging the lump's appearance for a scar

What are the alternatives to surgery?

The only alternative to surgery is to leave the lump alone if it is not causing any problems. Some lumps can disappear without treatment.

How soon can I resume my normal activities?

Depending on your occupation it is usually necessary to take at least 10-14 days or until the wound has healed.

Normal daily activities can also be resumed once the wound is fully healed.

Owner Sheila Gray
Review 2015