

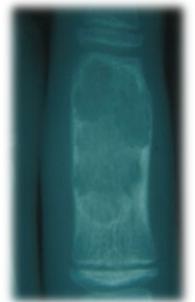


### What are tumours in the hand and wrist?

Lumps in the hand are very common and can arise from any tissue in the hand. Fortunately almost all are quite benign but rarely can be cancerous. As with anywhere else in the body a lump should be reviewed by your doctor to ensure it is safe or to determine if it needs further investigation and treatment.

Lumps can present as simply a lump that you feel. They may be painful or not, they may interfere with the way the finger or hand works and they may affect nerves causing pain, numbness or weakness. They may feel hard like bone or be very soft.

Your doctor may use the term “Tumour” when describing your lump however this is the term used for any lump and does not in any way imply the lump is a cancer.



#### What are common ones?

The commonest lump in the hand is a ganglion. This is a fluid filled cyst that is attached to a joint, usually the wrist or a tendon. An ultrasound is an accurate test to confirm this diagnosis. They may be treated by injection and aspiration or surgery.

The commonest solid lump in the hand is what is called a “Giant Cell Tumor”. This is quite a hard, slow growing lump that usually grows next to a joint. It may erode bone if it becomes too large and surgery is required to remove them. Lumps growing from nerves are less common in the hand. They are usually small and may be painful or have some nerve symptoms such as numbness or tingling.

Lumps growing from blood vessels can also be painful and may also have a bluish discoloration.

The largest lump seen in the hand is often a lipoma. These are benign lumps formed by fatty tissue, they are very safe but may grow very slowly to become quite large.

Lumps can sometimes grow in bones from either bone tissue or cartilage tissue. The commonest of these is an enchondroma. A lump of cartilage cells that grow very slowly within a bone. These slowly expand the bone and thin it out until it may break with the slightest trauma. Most people are unaware of these lumps until the bone breaks. They are simply removed once the fracture has healed.

#### What about less common tumours?

Cancerous lumps in the hand are extremely rare but they do happen. They are usually hard, situated in the palm side of the hand. They are stuck to the skin and may not move when pushed. They may be painful or pain free, rapid growing or slowly growing. They all require specialist treatment.

In general all lumps in the hand should be seen by your doctor who will usually be able to make a diagnosis and refer you for appropriate treatment. Some investigations may be needed such as an X-ray for bony lumps or an ultrasound for soft lumps or at times an MRI scan. There is very rarely anything to worry about but they should all be checked out by your doctor.

