

MIKE FOSTER
Hand Wrist and Elbow
Olecranon Bursa

Problem

- Fluid filled cyst about the elbow joint can cause pain and discomfort when knocked, often becomes inflamed and infected.

Cause

- Olecranon Bursa is a potential space that fills with fluid. This is usually caused by trauma, overuse or inflammatory conditions.

Diagnosis

- Clinical exam will show obvious swelling over the olecranon and ultrasound or MRI will confirm the cyst is full of fluid and not a solid lesion.
- Plain x-rays are taken to look for any underlying bone or joint problem.

Treatment

- Non operative measures such as anti-inflammatories, aspiration of cyst are sometimes successful.
- In recalcitrant cases surgical excision is required.
- Operation usually requires an overnight stay, general anaesthetic, excision of the bursa, sometimes excess skin needs to be removed.
- The patient is usually placed in a splint or bulky bandage to restrict elbow motion for two to three weeks.

Potential Complications

- Infection, Haematoma, stiffness, can get recurrence of the bursa
- The biggest issue is with wound healing

Post Operative Care

- Analgesia, Elevation,
- Back slab for two to three weeks until wound is well healed