

## CHAPTER

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### 2

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# HANDS

## Through Life

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I STUCK MYSELF WITH A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THE OTHER day. Intentionally. The first time in over 25 years of doctoring. More surprising, a six-year-old patient told me to do it, so I had to.

The boy, whom I'll call Tyler, came to the office with his father and had a large ganglion cyst on the back of his wrist—bigger than a jellybean. I told Tyler and his father all about ganglions and their treatment and my advice to drain it with a needle. Tyler didn't say anything when I mentioned "needle," but his eyes and body language told me that he wasn't liking the idea. His father in a loving way told him he needed to be brave, that some things just have to be endured. I added the standard (and true), "It's a very little needle. You'll hardly feel it." I sprayed a cold liquid first on my hand, then on his father's hand, and then on Tyler's to demonstrate its pre-needle numbing effect.

Even so, his facial expression told me that he wasn't going for it. Struggling to control his tears, he asked to see the needle. I showed it to him. Then with astounding wisdom he blurted, "If it doesn't hurt, stick yourself with it." I took a deep breath and thought, *wow, how am I going to make lemonade out of lemons?*

"If I stick myself, then will you go through with it too?" With his assurance that he would, I sprayed my wrist cold, tried to

## The Hand Owner's Manual

### Other topics covered in Chapter 2: Hands Through Life

#### AN AMAZING JOURNEY

From a single cell to a complete baby in 9 months

#### IS KNUCKLE CRACKING DANGEROUS?

Were your mother's warnings well-founded?

#### HOW BONES GROW AND HOW KIDS CAN STOP THEM

Bone biology and the perils of gymnastics and baseball

#### BIBLE BUMPS

Wrist ganglions

#### CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

The most common nerve compression problem in the hand

#### LET THE SURFER BEWARE

Medical information on the Internet

#### THE CELTIC CURSE

Dupuytren's contracture

#### "TRIGGER FINGER? I'VE NEVER TOUCHED A GUN."

The most common form of tendonitis in the hand

#### OH, MY ACHING THUMB

Osteoarthritis at the base of the thumb

#### GLUCOSAMINE AND CHONDROITIN FOR ARTHRITIS

Do they work?