

Olecranon bursitis

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This is a relatively common disorder in which the point of the elbow becomes red, warm, swollen and painful. Initially, septic arthritis may be suspected. However, on examination signs and symptoms are confined to the extensor aspect of the elbow (Figure 38.37), over the olecranon, and movement within an arc of 30–130° is almost always possible. Most cases settle with anti-inflammatory drugs. If the patient is pyrexial antibiotics should be given. Formal drainage of the bursa is indicated if purulent material is present. Chronic olecranon bursitis may be associated with calcific nodules of the bursal lining (Figure 38.38). These can be excised if they prove troublesome. Hans Jessen Panner, 1871–1930, radiologist, Copenhagen, Denmark, described this condition in 1927. Sir John Struthers, 1823–1899, Professor of Anatomy, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, UK. Jules Tinel, 1879–1952, physician, Hôpital Beaujon, Paris, France.

Figure 38.34 Synovial chondromatosis.

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