

Having a Ureteric Stent

Information for patients

This leaflet provides information to patients on living with a ureteric stent. It explains the benefits, expected side effects and guidance around removal.

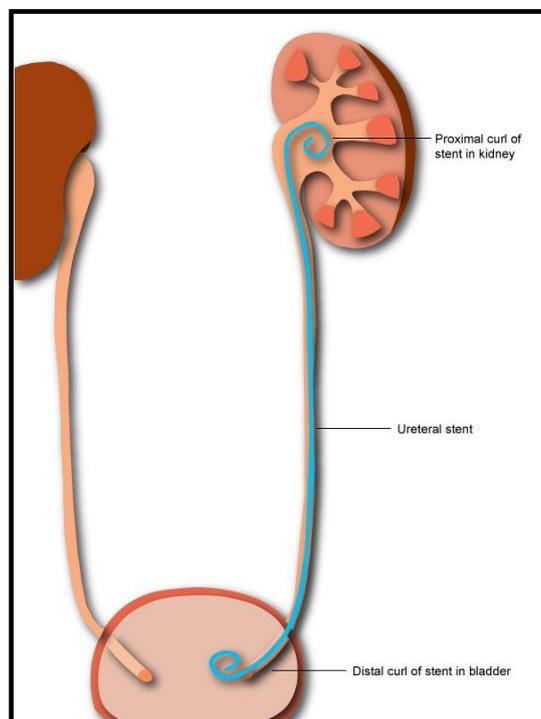
What is a Ureteric Stent?

The ureter is a vital thin tube structure allowing the urine that is produced by the kidney, to drain into the bladder. If this tube becomes blocked, it can result in pain, life threatening infection and damage to the kidney. A ureteric stent is a plastic tube used to keep the kidney draining and prevent these problems. There are curls on each end to stop the stent from moving. Stents are temporary and in some circumstances, a small length of string is attached to the lower part of the stent to facilitate removal.

When are ureteric stents inserted?

A ureteric stent is sometimes placed as an emergency to bypass an unexpected blockage in the ureter such as kidney stones. This is usually a temporary measure only to treat the blockage and you will be required to return after several weeks for a definitive procedure to breakdown and remove the stones.

A ureteric stent may also be inserted at the end of surgery involving your ureter. This is to protect you from blockage caused by swelling that occurs in the first few days after the procedure. Your surgeon should give you an indication of how long a stent is intended to stay in for, as the length of time can vary.



Common Side Effects

Unfortunately, stent symptoms are common and for many, but not all people, they can be quite uncomfortable. Some of the symptoms can mimic cystitis but you don't necessarily need antibiotics. Common symptoms include:

- Blood in urine – can be worse after strenuous activity
- Urgency and urinary frequency
- Pain in the kidney – this is often worse when passing urine
- Irritated bladder – this can cause discomfort
- Burning when passing urine.

Thankfully, although these symptoms are uncomfortable, they are not harmful and will subside once the stent is removed.

Are there any activities I should avoid?

Stents are flexible and you can continue with your activities as normal, however, the side effects from the stent might make you feel tired and uncomfortable.

It is safe to travel with a ureteric stent, however, you might find holidays less enjoyable if you are having a lot of symptoms.

It is not advisable to have sexual intercourse if you have a stent with an external string attached, as the stent will be at risk of displacement.

What extra care should I take?

Drink plenty of water, around 2-3 litres a day, to improve symptoms, help prevent infections and more stones forming.

If you experience pain, then you can take regular painkillers such as paracetamol. If this is not effective, please contact your GP.

If you have a stent with a string, then take extra care not to accidentally dislodge the stent.

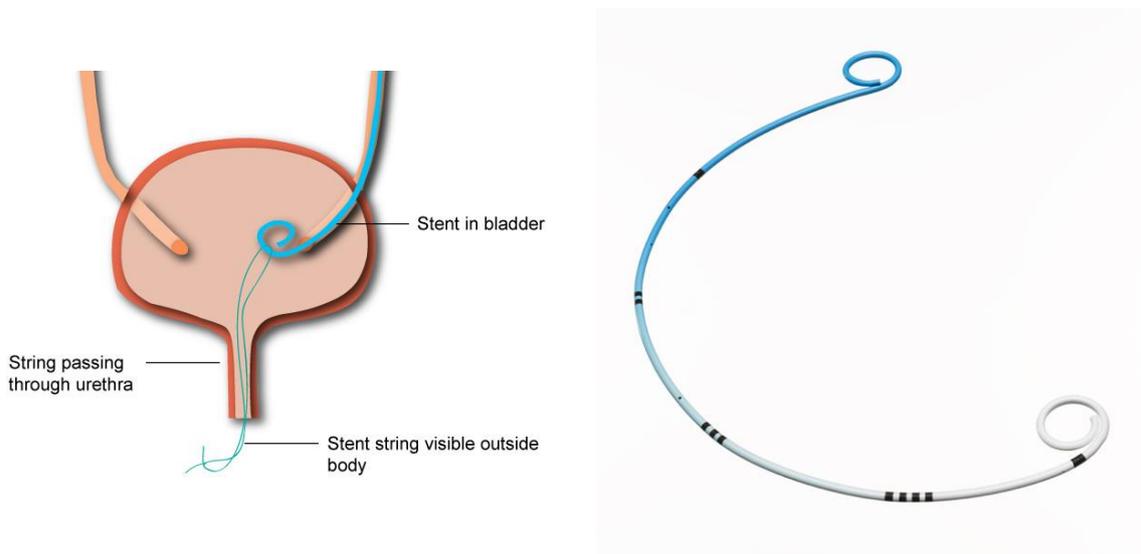
How will it be removed?

If you have had a stent inserted after kidney stone surgery, it is temporary and only needed for a short period of time. There are two main methods for removal.

1) Stent on a string

For most patients, the stent will only stay in place for 5-7 days. In these cases, we often place the stent attached to a string which stays outside the body. The string can be gently pulled until the entire stent is removed. This is very quick and does not cause significant discomfort. This can be done at home yourself, or if you prefer, one of the medical team can do it for you in the hospital.

The stent is about 20-30 cm long with 2 curls on each end. A string is attached to the lower end as shown in the pictures below.



2) Flexible Cystoscopy

If the stent is not attached to a string, the stent is removed by flexible cystoscopy in the outpatient department. Some local anaesthetic gel is used and a small camera is inserted into the bladder via your urethra (water pipe) by one of the urology staff. The end of the stent can then be grasped and pulled out. You will be given an appointment for this procedure.

Important

If you have not heard anything about your stent removal, please contact the urology department as these stents should not be used for more than a few months at a time.

If you have had a stent inserted as an emergency then you will need a further procedure and should contact the waiting list office if you have not had a date within 2-3 months.

When to seek medical attention

- If you become unwell with a fever
- If you are passing excessive blood and clots in the urine
- If you cannot pass any urine.

Who should I contact if I have a problem or question?

For questions regarding dates for surgery, please contact the waiting list office on 01895 279096

For general questions, contact the Urology Department secretaries on 01895 238282

What should I do in case of an emergency?

If you feel unwell or in case of emergency: contact your doctor or go to the Emergency Department.

Languages/ Alternative Formats

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format.

Please contact: 01895 279973

Fadlan waydii haddii aad warbixintan ku rabto luqad ama hab kale. Fadlan la xidhiidh 01895 279 973

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رابطہ کرو

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Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem informacji pacjenta (patient information) pod numerem telefonu: 01895 279973.

如果你需要這些資料的其他語言版本、大字体、或音頻格式，請致電01895 279 973 查詢。

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يرجى الاتصال بالرقم التالي 01895279973 .

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