

Living with Ureteric Stent

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Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

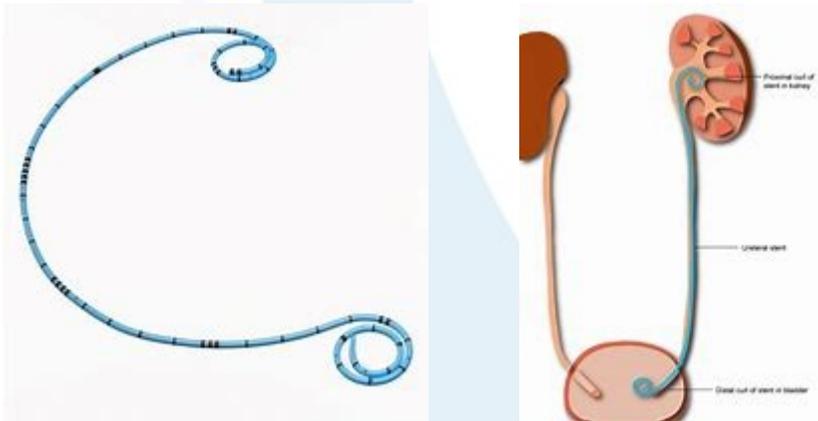
 /sthknhs  @sthk.nhs
www.sthk.nhs.uk

Author: Urology Nurse Specialist
Department: Urology
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What is a Ureteric Stent?

Ureteric stent is a plastic tube used to keep the kidney draining if the ureter (thin tube structure) becomes blocked. This can result in pain, life threatening infection and damage to the kidney.

It is about 20-30cm long with a 2 curls on each end.



Why are stents inserted?

A ureteric stent is sometimes inserted as an emergency to bypass an unexpected blockage in the ureter such as kidney stone.

This is usually a temporary measure only to treat the blockage and you will be required to return after several weeks for a definite procedure to breakdown and remove the stones.

It may also be inserted at the end of the surgery involving your ureter to protect you from blockage caused by swelling that occurs in the first few days after the procedure.

Who can I contact if I have a problem when I get home?

If you experience any problems related to your surgery or admission once you have been discharged home.

Please feel free to contact the ward for advice from the nurse in charge.

They will assist you via the telephone, advise you return to your GP or ask you to make your way to the Emergency Department at Whiston Hospital depending upon the nature of your concern.

Ward 4A – 0151 430 1420

Ward 4B – 0151 430 1637

Ward 4C – 0151 430 1643

Sanderson Suite -01744 646 112

Stone Nurse Specialist - 07880 293 602

Who can I contact for more help or information?

Best Health (prepared by the British Medical Association)

NHS Clinical Knowledge Summaries (formerly known as Prodigy)

NHS Direct

Patient UK

Royal College of Anaesthetists (for information about anaesthetics)

Royal College of Surgeons (patient information section)

Please ask on the ward or in the Outpatient Clinic for the appropriate information.

This information will become part of the formal process of obtaining written, informed consent for the procedure.

What should I do if no-one contacts me about removal of the stent?

The British Association of Urological Surgeons does run a national “stent register” to ensure that we do not forget to remove your stent.

However, if you have not received any contact within 6 weeks of your discharge from hospital, please contact your Urologist or Specialist Nurse.

Students

There may be students present during your consultation as part of their on-going training.

Please let the staff know if you wish to be seen by a doctor only.

Are there any other important points?

This publication provides input from specialists, the British Association of Urological Surgeons, the Department of Health and evidence-based sources as a supplement to any advice you may already have been given by your GP.

Alternative treatments can be discussed in more detail with your urologist or Specialist Nurse.

How are stents inserted?

Insertion of ureteric stent is usually performed under a general anaesthetic.

The surgeon will need to pass an instrument via the urethra (the water pipe leading to the bladder) and use X-ray control to ensure that the stent is correctly positioned.

What should I expect afterwards?

You may find that, when you first pass urine it stings or burns and is slightly blood stained.

You may also experience a desire to pass urine frequently and some discomfort in the lower part of your abdomen. Men can experience pain at the tip of the penis and some women develop symptoms similar to those of cystitis.

These acute symptoms will, in most cases, settle within 24-48 hours.

Some patients with ureteric stents develop pain in the kidney when they pass urine; this is quite common and is not a cause for concern.

What should I do afterwards?

For the first few days after insertion of a ureteric stent, it is important to drink plenty of fluids, 2-3 litres (4-5 pints) each day, in order to flush your system through.

Your stay in hospital should be no more than one night.

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

How long does a stent need to remain in place?

The stent has to be kept in place as long as necessary, i.e. until obstruction is relieved.

This depends on the cause of obstruction and the nature of its treatment.

For the majority of patients, the stents are required for only a short duration, from a few days to few months.

When the underlying problem is not a kidney stone, the stent can stay even longer. There are special stents, which may be left in for much longer time.

How is the stent removed?

If you have had a stent inserted after kidney surgery, it is temporary and only needed for a short period of time.

There are two ways for removal:

1. Stent on a string

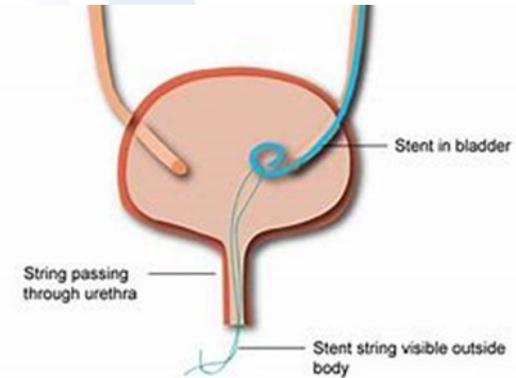
For most patients, the stent will only stay in place for 3-7 days. In these cases, we often place the stent attached to a string which stays outside the body.

The string can be pulled until the entire stent is removed.

This is very quick and does not cause significant discomfort.

The stent is about 20-30cm long with 2 curls on each end.

A string is attached to the lower end as shown in the picture 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 to numb and lubricate, and a small camera is inserted into the bladder via your urethra (water pipe) by one of the urology staff/doctor.

The end of the stent can be grasped and pulled out.

In very occasional cases this might be performed as a day case for removal under a general or spinal anaesthetic.

Please note that most stents should be removed after approximately 6 weeks.

If you have not heard from us within that period of time, please let us know to be sure that we have booked you in to have the stent removed.

If you need additional information about the procedure of stent insertion/removal, we can provide specific information about consent to these procedures.