

Information about having an
Ureteric Stent

What is a Ureteric Stent?

The ureter is a small narrow tube which takes urine from the kidney down to the bladder. Any blockage in the ureter or external pressure onto the ureter will cause difficulty in urine flow from the kidney to the bladder. Inserting a ureteric stent will help this.

The procedure may be undertaken in stages, after a nephrostomy (the insertion of a drain into the kidney). This allows the urine to be passed from the kidney outside the body via a drain into a collecting bag, to make sure the kidney is functioning.

Who will do it?

A specially trained doctor called a Radiologist.

Where will it be done?

Usually in a screening room in the x-ray department.

When can I discuss the procedure?

You can discuss this with your referring doctor in the ward, and also the Radiologist before the procedure.

Consent

We will ask you to sign a consent form before the procedure. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have. When signing the form you should know what we plan to do, alternative treatments, and any risks or complication of the procedure.

What preparation is required before the procedure?

You cannot eat for 6 hours before the procedure but you may drink small amounts of clear fluid up to 2 hours before the procedure.

You will need to undress and wear a hospital gown.

What happens during the procedure?

This is a sterile procedure however the technique used may vary but generally you will lie on your stomach on the x-ray table. We will give you sedatives or painkillers via a needle in your arm. We will monitor your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, oxygen intake). You may need oxygen.

The radiologist will use the x-ray or ultrasound equipment to guide a fine plastic tube (catheter). Usually this will be in your back just below your ribs. We will numb your skin with a local anaesthetic. We identify the blockage and then insert a stent. A drain may be left in place initially, and we will remove this at a later date.

You may experience some slight discomfort for a short period of time, painkillers will help this.

How long will it take?

Every patient's situation is different, for a variety of reasons; however you can expect to be in the x-ray department for about one hour.

What happens afterwards?

You will return to your ward and remain on bed rest for a few hours. The nursing staff will monitor you and carry out routine observations (blood pressure, pulse etc). A few hours after the procedure you will be able to eat and drink.

The doctor looking after you will decide how long the catheter has to remain in place. Removing the stent is usually pain free and takes place in the x-ray department.

Are there any risks?

This is a safe procedure but as with any medical treatment some risks and complications can arise.

In almost all cases some blood will appear in the urine. This is not dangerous and usually stops within a few hours.

Very rarely putting a stent in can cause a tear in the ureter. This is a serious condition and may need an operation or inserting another stent.

If you have any questions please telephone the number on your appointment card or letter.