

Instructions for post-operative care of ureteric stents

Patient fact sheet

DECEMBER 2023

This information is for people who have had a stent surgically inserted into their ureter, and their carers.

PATIENT INFORMATION (clinician to complete)

Please keep this information safe and bring it with you to appointments until your stent is removed.

(patient name)

had the following stent inserted:

stent with string

stent without string

in the

left ureter

right ureter

Insertion date

Stent implant number and manufacturer (if available)

Notes

Follow- up appointment

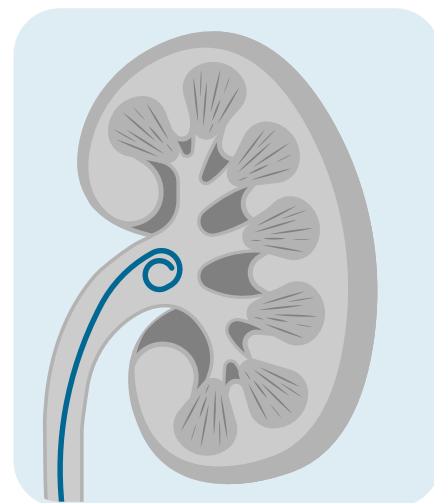
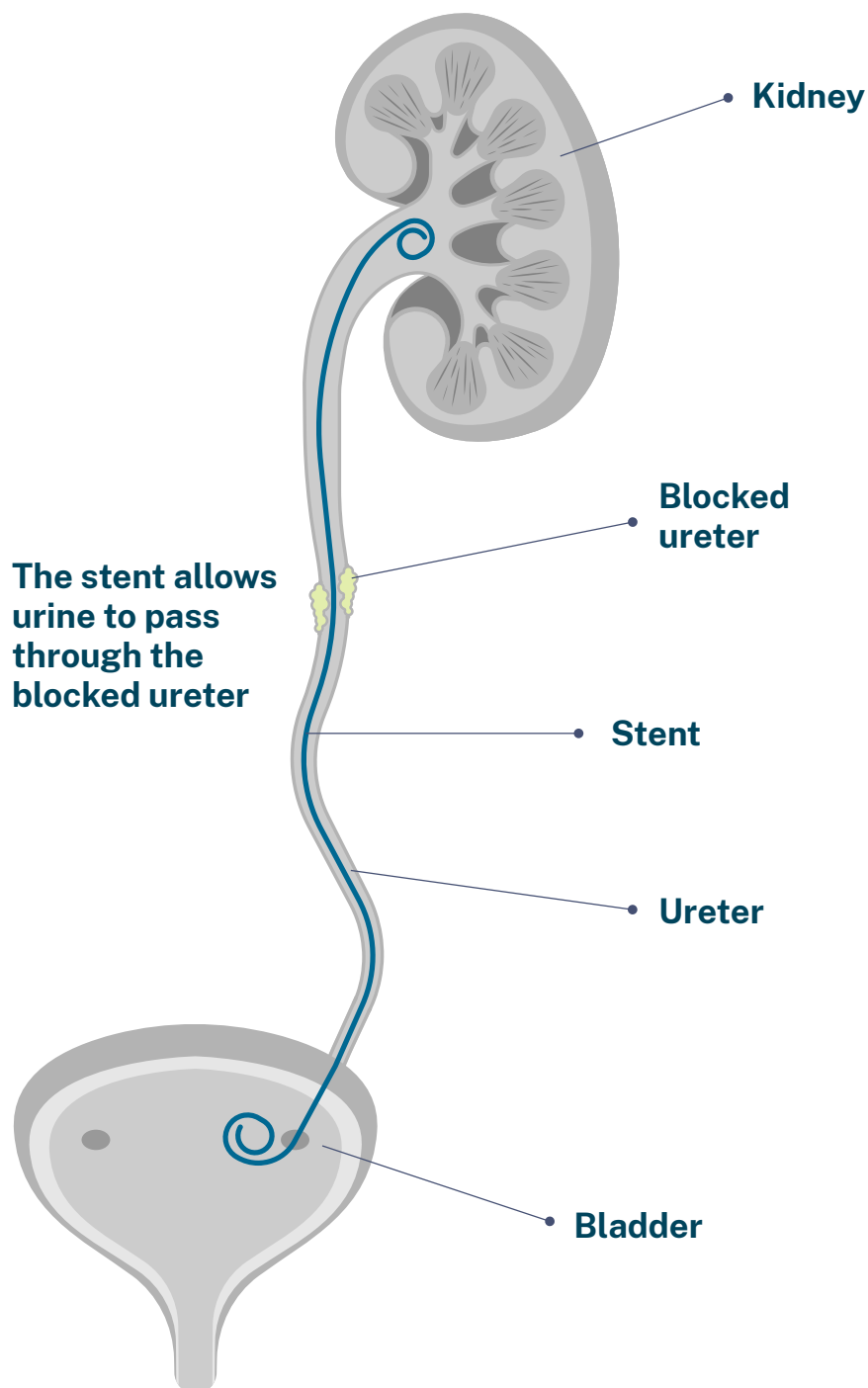
Doctor:

Date:

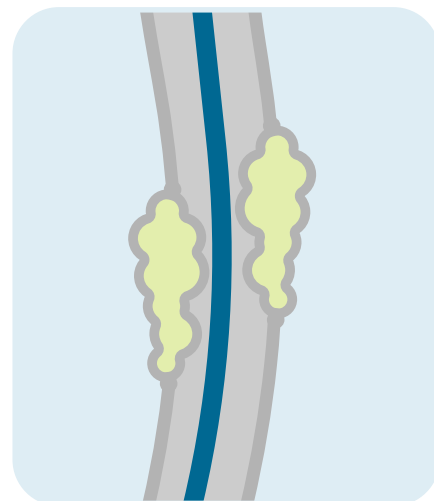
Time:

The stent should NOT stay inside permanently as this can cause infection and damage your ureter, kidney or bladder. Please discuss with your doctor how long your stent should stay in.

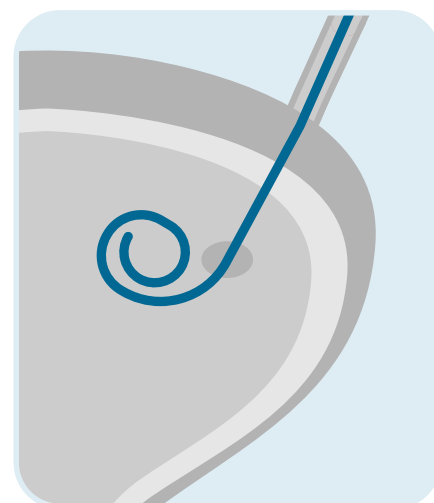
Ureteric stent



The top of the stent sits in the kidney.



The stent allows urine to pass through the blocked ureter.



The end of the stent is in the bladder. The stent allows urine to flow from the kidney and into the bladder.



What is a ureteric stent and how is it removed?

A stent is a temporary plastic or metal tube put inside your ureter when there is a blockage. Blockages can be caused by a kidney stone or a narrow ureter. The stent will hold your ureter open so urine can flow from your kidneys to your bladder. It will help to ease pain and pressure, and help stop damage to the kidneys. Most ureteric stents have curls at each end that gently hold it in place. These curls sit in the kidney and bladder.

There are two types of temporary stents:

1. **Stents without a string.** These usually stay in longer and are taken out during a procedure called a cystoscopy.
2. **Stents with a string.** These have a string attached that comes out of your vagina or penis. The string is kept in place by special tape. You will not need an operation to take out a stent with a string. They are taken out in a urology clinic or at home with instructions from your doctor.



The benefits of stents

- Pain relief
- Temporary unblocking of the kidney by pushing a kidney stone to the side so urine can flow – stents do not get rid of the stone
- Helps prevent lasting kidney damage
- Helps lower the risk of serious urinary tract infections (infections in your urine)



Home care

- While the stent is in place, drink plenty of fluid. Unless your doctor says otherwise, you should have at least 6-8 glasses of water a day. This can ease the discomfort caused by the stent.
- Take pain relief medicine when needed. Follow instructions from your doctor.



How long should my stent stay in?

Please discuss with your doctor how long your temporary ureteric stent should stay in. As a guideline it should stay:

- in most cases, for a few days up to around 4 weeks
- in some cases, including a narrow ureter, for longer than 4 weeks and no longer than 3 months
- for patients in palliative care, up to 1 year.



A ureteric stent is temporary and cannot stay in. If you move away from your local health district or travel overseas while you have a stent in place, you should promptly book a check-up with a doctor or hospital in your new location. Leaving your stent in for too long can cause problems such as infections, damage to your kidneys and ureter, or more stones.



What to expect after your stent is inserted

Most patients will feel their stent but not have any problems with it. Some patients may experience one or more common side effects. Most side effects will lessen over time. Please contact your doctor if your side effects become severe or if you are concerned. Common side effects include:

- irritation, discomfort, burning or pain when you pass urine. These types of side effects may happen after increased physical activity.
- a need to pass urine more often and more urgently
- some pressure, general ache or shooting pain in the lower and mid back when passing urine
- occasional leaking of urine (incontinence)
- a sense of incomplete bladder emptying
- a small to moderate amount of blood in the urine, which may increase with strenuous physical activity.



Sometimes a stent may move out of place causing increased symptoms and pain. If this happens, contact your doctor or go to your nearest hospital emergency department immediately. If the stent falls out, put it in a plastic bag to be checked by a nurse or doctor.



When to see a doctor

It is important to see a doctor if you:

- are passing blood clots or have a lot of blood in your urine
- are unable to pass urine.



Urinary tract infections in patients with stents need treatment. Contact your doctor or go to your nearest hospital emergency department if you experience any of these symptoms:

- fever
- increased pain around your bladder or kidneys
- severe pain, burning or stinging when passing urine.



Physical activity and work

You can still do normal physical activity. Normal physical activity is different for each person and can include general housework, walking, low intensity cycling, gentle swimming, raking leaves or mowing the lawn.



Avoid lifting heavy weights or doing strenuous sports. Strenuous activities can result in blood in your urine and discomfort around the mid and lower back. If your work involves strenuous activity or heavy lifting, talk with your doctor for advice on a safe work plan. Strenuous activity is different for everyone and depends on how an activity feels for each person. If you are unsure about an activity, speak to your doctor.



Sex

Sexual activity is not advised if you have a stent with a string. It may cause the stent to move out of place and cause discomfort. There are no restrictions for stents without a string.



Pregnancy and breastfeeding

If you are pregnant, your doctor will give you advice on antibiotics, how long your stent should stay in and the plan to take it out. A stent will not usually affect breastfeeding, however you should discuss with your doctor whether there are any medications you may need to take that will affect breastfeeding.

Interpreter

Speak to your doctor or a nurse if you or a family member need an interpreter. Or contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) direct on **131 450** or by using the QR code below:

