

Going home with a ureteric stent

Urology Patient information

What is a ureteric stent?

A ureteric stent is a small, soft tube placed inside the ureter. The ureter is the tube that carries urine from the kidney to the bladder. The stent is usually blue, between 20-28cm long and 2mm wide. The stent helps urine drain from the kidney. One end sits in the kidney and the other sits in the bladder. Both ends are curled to help keep the stent in place. The stent is flexible and designed to move with your body without causing damage. You can still urinate normally while the stent is in place..

Why do I need a stent?

Your doctor may put in a stent to help urine drain from your kidney.

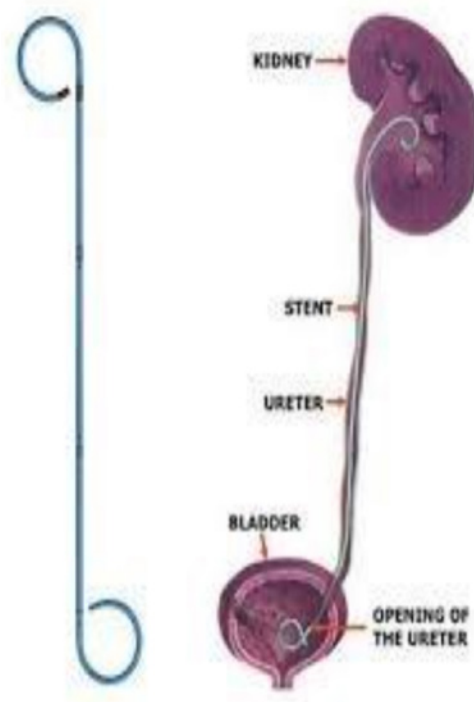
You may need a stent:

- if a kidney stone is blocking the flow of urine
- after an operation on your kidney or ureter
- to help the ureter heal after surgery
- to reduce swelling in the ureter
- if the ureter is too narrow
- to treat a blockage caused by infection
- to stop pressure building up in the kidney
- to help protect your kidney from damage
- if something is pressing on the ureter
- to help prepare for more treatment later, such as removing a kidney stone

Your doctor will tell you why you need the stent and how long it will stay in place.

How long can the stent stay in?

How long the stent stays in depends on why it was put in. Most stents can stay in for up to 12 months, but we usually recommend removing or changing them within 6 months. This is because they can become blocked, damaged, or covered with stone deposits.



What should I expect after the stent is put in?

It is normal to have some symptoms while the stent is in place. Some people notice more symptoms than others.

You may feel mild pain or a burning feeling when urinating. This happens because the stent can move a little when your bladder empties.

Common symptoms

You may notice:

- needing to urinate more often
- a burning feeling when urinating
- a sudden urge to urinate quickly
- pain or discomfort in your side, bladder, urethra, or genitals
- blood in your urine
- pain at the tip of the penis in men
- small leaks
- feeling like your bladder is not fully empty
- urine infections

Can the stent affect my daily life?

Most people can still do their normal daily activities.

Exercise and sports

- You can usually still exercise and play sports
- Hard exercise may cause pain or blood in your urine

Work

- Most people can keep working
- Heavy physical work may feel uncomfortable

Social life

- A ureteric stent can affect your daily life because of the above symptoms. Some people have more symptoms than others. Planning ahead, treating your symptoms, and talking to your healthcare team can help you manage them
- You may need to use the toilet more often

Travel

- You can usually travel with a stent
- Long journeys may feel uncomfortable
- Tell your travel insurance company that you have a stent

Sex

- Sex is usually safe with a stent
- Some people may feel discomfort

Possible problems

Stent build-up

Over time, crystals can build up on the stent.
This is more likely the longer the stent is left in.

Stent movement

Rarely, the stent may move or fall out.

If this happens, contact your Urology Nurse Practitioner or your Consultant or out of hours call NHS **111** for advice. Go to the Emergency Department if you have severe pain, fever, or cannot pass urine.

Urine infections

A stent can increase the chance of getting a urine infection.

Signs of infection include:

- fever or high temperature
- burning when weeing urinating
- feeling unwell

If you have these symptoms, contact your GP. You may need a urine test and antibiotics.

What can I do to help myself?

- 1 Keep well hydrated by drinking two to three litres of water each day, unless a doctor has told you to drink less because of heart, kidney or liver problem or because you are taking water tablets
- 2 Contact your GP if you think you have an infection
- 3 Contact the hospital, urology nurse practitioners, or your consultant if you think the stent has been left in too long.
- 4 Ask your GP or pharmacist about pain relief if needed

Your doctor may suggest medicines such as Tamsulosin or Solifenacin to help with symptoms.

When should I ask for help?

Contact your GP or hospital if you have:

- severe pain that does not get better
- signs of infection
- large amounts of blood in your urine
- blood clots in your urine
- problems urinating
- no urine coming out
- the stent falling out or moving

Questions or concerns

Please contact the urology nurse practitioners:

0300 019 5886 or 0300 019 4871

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

More information

British Association of Urological Surgeons

www.baus.org.uk

You can find information leaflets about living with a ureteric stent on their website.

To read this leaflet in a different language,
please visit our website: **www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets**
and use the language and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499**
or email **uhd.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net**.

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