

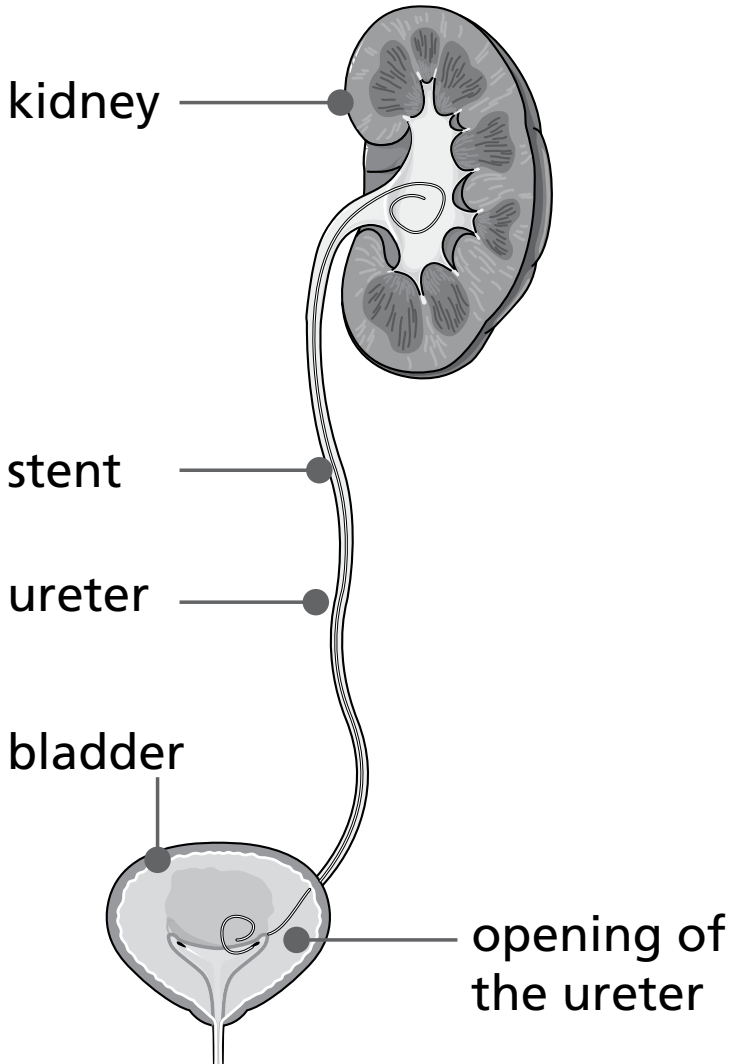
# Ureteric stent

Information for patients



## What is a ureteric stent?

A ureteric stent is a thin plastic tube which is inserted into the ureter between your kidney and your bladder. This allows the urine produced by your kidney to pass easily into your bladder.



## Why do I have a ureteric stent?

You have had a ureteric stent inserted because of an obstruction (blockage) in your ureter. The stent makes a channel, allowing the urine to flow from the kidney, helping the kidney to drain.

Common causes of obstruction are:

- a kidney stone or parts of a stone that have broken away
- narrowing of the ureter anywhere along its path
- from inflammation following an operation, or after an instrument has been inserted into the ureter and kidney.

## Are there any side effects?

You should be able to carry on with your usual life with a ureteric stent in place, but you are likely to be able to feel its presence most of the time. Side effects are usually quite mild, but there is a risk that they may become severe.

### **Side effects include:**

- an increased frequency in passing urine (needing to go more often)
- the need to rush to the toilet to pass urine (urgency)
- blood in the urine. This is quite common and you should drink around 2 litres (3 and a half pints) of water each day, to help flush your system through.
- a sensation that your bladder is not completely empty after passing urine
- a slight risk of episodes of incontinence (leaking of urine).

These side effects are usually due to the stent being inside the bladder and causing irritation. They will disappear when the stent is removed.

## Pain and discomfort

Stents can cause discomfort and pain in the bladder, kidneys, groin, urethra and the genitals. The discomfort or pain may be more noticeable after physical activity and passing urine.

Taking regular painkillers, such as paracetamol, should ease the discomfort. If you find the pain is not controlled easily you should see your GP. They may be able to prescribe some different medication to help.

## Living with a stent

### **Work activities**

You can continue to work, but if your work involves heavy manual labour or physical activities you may experience some discomfort. Urinary symptoms and pain associated with the stent can also make you feel tired.

If the stent causes you significant problems at work, you may wish to discuss with your manager the possibility of temporary adjustments to your work situation.

### **Dietary and fluid advice**

We recommend that you drink around 2 litres (3 and a half pints) of fluid per day. The best fluid is water or diluted squash. You can drink alcohol in moderation, but this may interfere with some of your medications; please check with your doctor if you are taking any tablets.

Drinking plenty of fluids cuts down the risk of infections and will reduce the amount of blood in your urine.

Try to avoid becoming constipated, as straining may cause discomfort at the site of the stent. This could be in your kidney or bladder. A diet rich in fibre can prevent this. You should speak to your GP if you are experiencing problems with constipation.

## **Sex**

There are no restrictions on your sex life if you have a stent. However, there is a chance you may experience discomfort during sexual activity.

## Other complications

Occasionally a stent can become displaced and slip out of the water pipe (urethra). If this happens you should contact the hospital.

Having a stent, along with your original kidney problem, can make it more likely that you will develop a urinary tract infection. Symptoms of an infection include feeling cold and shivery, with a raised temperature above 37.5°C, increased pain or discomfort, a burning sensation when passing urine and feeling unwell. You should see your GP if you get any of these symptoms, as you may need to be treated with antibiotics.

Please contact your consultant's secretary if your stent has been in for longer than your doctor told you it was going to be or for more than six months, and you have not been sent a date for stent removal.

### **Consultant's Secretary**

Tel: **01865 234 444**

(Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm)

You may wish to record the date of your stent insertion here:

.....

## How long will I have the stent for?

This varies from person to person and depends on why the stent was put in, the cause of the obstruction and the type of treatment you are having. Your urology doctor should be able to give you an idea of how long they expect the stent to be in place.

If your stent is in the correct position it can stay in for up to six months without the need to replace it. There are also special stents that are designed for longer term use.

## How to contact us

If you have further questions please either speak to your GP or contact the Urology Nurse Practitioners:

Tel: **01865 572 373**

Please leave an answerphone message. Messages are checked throughout the day, Monday to Friday.

### **Department of Urology**

Tel: **01865 234 444**

(Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm)

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **[PALS@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@ouh.nhs.uk)**

Author: Ben Turney, Urology Consultant  
October 2016  
Review: October 2019  
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Oxford OX3 9DU  
[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)

