

Why do I need a stent?

In patients who have or might have an obstruction (blockage) of the kidney, due to an obstructing kidney stone, ureteral injury or ureteral stricture, an internal drainage tube called a “stent” is commonly placed in the ureter. The stent is placed between the kidney and the bladder, which allows for urine to drain from the kidney to the bladder to temporarily relieve the obstruction or to help prevent an obstruction.

What is a Ureteral Stent?

A ureteral stent is a specially designed hollow tube made of a flexible plastic material that is placed in the ureter. The length of the stents used varies between 24-30 cm.

How are Ureteral Stents Inserted?

The insertion of a ureteral stent is usually performed under general anesthesia in the operating room. A procedure called a cystoscopy (inserting a scope into the bladder) is performed and with the use of fluoroscopy (special type of x-ray) the stent is placed into the ureter. The use of fluoroscopy ensures proper placement of the ureteral stent.



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Please call us if you have any questions.

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Understanding Ureteral Stents and Ureteral Stent Care



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What should I expect when I have a stent in?

A: You may experience a stinging or burning sensation and may see some blood in your urine. You may also have the sensation to urinate frequently. Some men may experience pain at the top of the penis and some patients may have bladder pain or discomfort.

Q: Is it normal to have discomfort with a stent in place?

A: Yes, some patients may feel the stent. The stent may cause bladder irritation and may cause pain in the kidney during urination because the stent allows urine to flow back toward the kidney. The stent may also cause the bladder to cramp (spasm) during or at the end of urination.

Q: Why does the stent make me have to urinate so much?

A: As shown in the picture on the top right, the stent has two curls on each end, one in the kidney and one in the bladder. The curl of the stent in the bladder will irritate the lining of the bladder and cause bladder spasms (cramps). These spasms give you the feeling of having to urgently urinate.

Q: Is there anything I can do to help relieve the discomfort of my stent?

A: Yes, stay well hydrated with water and/or Gatorade. Make sure you are moving your bowels well, constipation may irritate your bladder more. Use over-the-counter stool softeners like Colace to help with constipation while taking pain medication.

Q: Is it normal to have blood in my urine?

A: Yes, the stent may cause some irritation to the tissue. Blood in the urine may be present while your stent is in place and may continue after stent removal.

Q: Is it normal to constantly drip urine (have urinary incontinence) with a stent?

A: No, if you experience constant urinary incontinence (constant dripping of urine) the stent may have migrated out of proper position. Please call the Academic Urology office if you experience constant dripping of urine.

Q: Is it normal to have pain after my stent is removed?

A: Yes, some patients may experience pain during and after stent removal. Once the stent is removed, the symptoms resolve usually within 24 to 48 hours.

Q: Is it normal to have a fever with a stent?

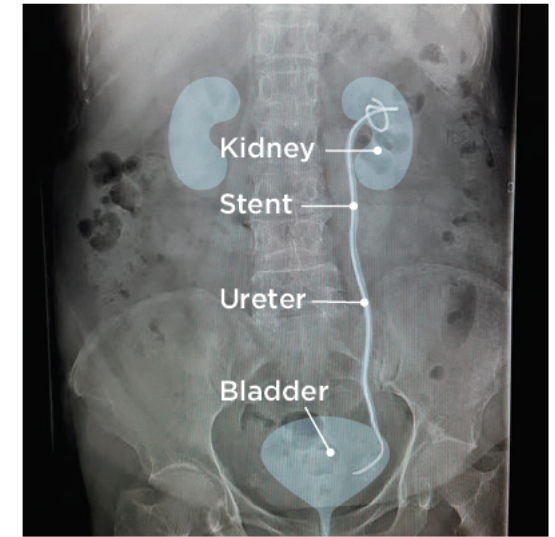
A: No, if you experience fevers while having a stent in place or after stent removal please contact the Academic Urology office and let your urologist know that you have a fever.

Q: Can I have intercourse with a ureteral stent in place?

A: Yes, however, increased physical activity may cause increased stent discomfort and increase blood in your urine (hematuria).

Q: Can I bath after my stent is taken out?

A: Yes, you may bathe once your stent is removed. If you have a surgical wound ask your urologist when you may bathe.



Q: How long does my stent have to stay in?

A: The length of time a stent needs to stay inserted depends on the urological condition that your Urologist is treating. Ask your Urologist how long you may need to have your stent in place. For patients requiring long-term stents, the stent should generally be removed or changed within 3 months of insertion. Stents left in place for longer periods of time can lead to stone formation around the stent obstruction and/or cause urinary tract infections.

Q: How is my stent removed?

A: The stent is removed by a procedure called cystoscopy with stent removal. Cystoscopy is a procedure where a flexible scope is inserted into your bladder through your urethra, which allows for visualization of your urethra and bladder. The stent is removed by pulling on the string until the stent is completely removed. This procedure is typically done in the office setting.