

Patient Information Sheet: Ureteral Stents

What Is a Ureteral Stent?

A ureteral stent is a small, flexible tube inserted into the ureter (the tube connecting the kidney to the bladder). Its purpose is to keep the ureter open and allow urine to flow from the kidney to the bladder. Stents are often used to relieve blockages, support healing after surgery, or prevent complications from kidney stones.

Why Is a Ureteral Stent Needed?

You may need a ureteral stent if you have:

- A kidney stone causing blockage.
- Swelling or scarring in the ureter.
- A narrowed or obstructed ureter.
- Surgery or a procedure (like ureteroscopy or lithotripsy) requiring temporary drainage.

What to Expect with a Ureteral Stent

1. Symptoms You Might Experience:

- Frequent urination or urgency.
- Discomfort in the lower abdomen, side, or back.
- A pulling sensation during urination.
- Blood in the urine, especially after physical activity.
- Mild pain or pressure in the bladder.

2. These symptoms are normal and should improve over time.

3. Activity Restrictions:

- Avoid heavy lifting or intense physical activity.
- Stay hydrated to help reduce irritation and flush the urinary system.

4. Medications:

- Your doctor may prescribe pain relievers or antispasmodics to manage discomfort.
- Take antibiotics as directed if prescribed.

Care Tips for Living with a Stent

- **Hydration:** Drink at least 8–10 glasses of water daily unless instructed otherwise.

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- **Pain Management:** Use medications as prescribed and apply a heating pad for mild discomfort.
- **Monitor for Infection:** Watch for symptoms like fever, chills, or foul-smelling urine, and contact your doctor immediately if they occur.

How Long Will the Stent Stay In?

- Ureteral stents are temporary and typically removed within 1–6 weeks, depending on your condition and treatment plan.
- It is essential to attend follow-up appointments to have the stent removed or replaced as directed by your doctor. Leaving a stent in for too long may lead to complications.

Possible Complications

Call your healthcare provider immediately if you experience:

- Severe pain not relieved by medication.
- Persistent or heavy bleeding in the urine.
- Difficulty or inability to urinate.
- Signs of infection (fever, chills, severe discomfort).

Ureteral Stent Removal

- Stent removal is a quick and simple outpatient procedure. You may feel some mild discomfort during removal, but it typically resolves quickly.

Preventing Future Ureteral Issues

- Stay hydrated to reduce the risk of kidney stones and blockages.
- Follow dietary recommendations from your doctor, especially if you have a history of kidney stones.
- Maintain regular check-ups with your urologist to monitor urinary health.

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