What is a stent?

- A stent is a hollow plastic tube that lies within your ureter (the passage connecting your bladder to your kidneys).
- A stent may be placed in your ureter to bypass a blockage (often caused by a stone), a narrowing of the ureter, swelling after an operation or a congenital condition.
- The stent is held in place by coils at each end, which sit in the kidney and the bladder.
- Using stents prevents blockages that can lead to pain and kidney damage.

Important information about your stent

- Important note: your stent is temporary and cannot stay in permanently. Your surgeon should advise you how long the stent is required.
- Your surgical team will mark your body either on the thigh, perineum or groin to indicate which side the stent will be placed.

What to expect after your stent insertion

- Most patients will be aware of their stent but will not experience significant problems. Some patients may have moderate side effects and a few may experience more severe side effects. Most symptoms or side effects will decrease over time.
- Symptoms or side effects may include:
  - Discomfort, irritation, pain or burning feeling when you pass urine. This may increase after strenuous activity or only noted when passing urine.
  - Frequency—you may feel the need to pass urine more often.
  - Urgency—you may need to pass urine more urgently.
  - You may have a small amount of blood in the urine. This may increase after strenuous activity.
How will it be removed?

There are two main methods for removal.

1 Stent on a string

- For most patients, the stent will only stay in place for 5-7 days. In these cases, we often place the stent attached to a string which stays outside the body. The string can be gently pulled until the entire stent is removed. This will usually be done by one of the Urology team, it is very quick and should not cause significant discomfort.

- The stent is about 20-30 cm long with 2 curls on each end. A string is attached to the lower end as shown in the picture.

2 Flexible Cystoscopy

- If the stent is not attached to a string, the stent is removed by flexible cystoscopy in the outpatient department. Some local anaesthetic gel is used and a small camera is inserted into the bladder via your urethra (water pipe) by one of the urology staff. The end of the stent can then be grasped and pulled out. You will be given an appointment for this procedure.

Home care

- Drink plenty of fluid. This will ease the discomfort caused by the stent.

- Paracetamol or ibuprofen may be used for pain relief (always follow dosing instructions on the label).

Please seek advice if:

- you become unwell with fever, have increasing pain around your kidney or bladder areas, or experience worsening burning when passing urine

- you have heavy or excessive blood in your urine, or you are passing clots

- you are unable to pass urine.

Contact information

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