

Patient information

Extracorporeal shockwave disintegration of stones: procedure-specific information

What is the evidence base for this information?

This leaflet includes advice from consensus panels, the British Association of Urological Surgeons, the Department of Health and evidence-based sources; it is, therefore, a reflection of best practice in the UK. It is intended to supplement any advice you may already have been given by your GP or other healthcare professionals. Alternative treatments are outlined below and can be discussed in more detail with your Urologist or Specialist Nurse.

What does the procedure involve?

This involves the administration of shockwaves through the skin to fragment urinary tract stones into small enough fragments to pass naturally. The procedure involves either x-ray or ultrasound scanning to localise the stone(s).

What are the alternatives to this procedure?

Telescopic surgery, open surgery, observation to allow spontaneous passage.

What should I expect before the procedure?

You will be admitted on the same day as your treatment. It may be useful to bring your own dressing gown to wear over your hospital gown.



On arrival you will be admitted and assessed in preparation for the treatment, the nurse will check temperature / blood pressure etc. You will be prescribed an anti-inflammatory suppository as a painkiller. Additional or alternative painkillers can be given if necessary.

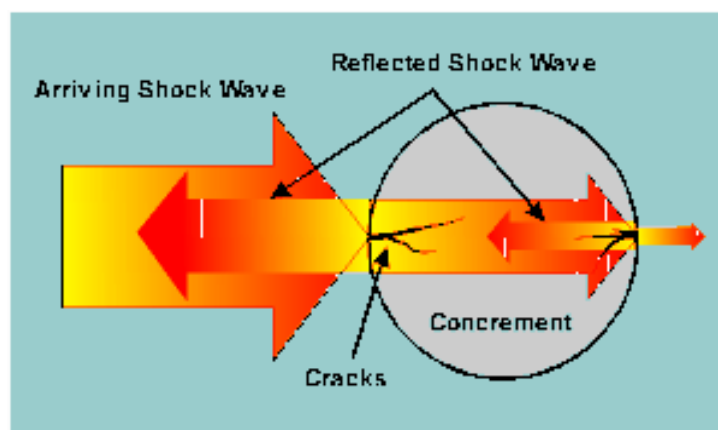
Please be sure to inform your urologist in advance of your surgery if you have any of the following:

- an artificial heart valve
- a heart pacemaker or defibrillator
- an artificial blood vessel graft
- a prescription for a blood thinning drug

What happens during the procedure?

No anaesthetic is necessary and you will be awake throughout the procedure.

The treatment will be monitored by a nurse and a lithotripsy technician. The shock waves can cause deep discomfort in the kidney and a sensation of being flicked with an elastic band on the skin of your back. If this proves excessively painful we will stop the treatment and rebook the session giving additional painkillers to make the treatment tolerable. Treatment normally lasts between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the size of your stone(s).



What happens immediately after the procedure?

Immediately after the treatment you will normally be taken back to a waiting area to recover with a cup of tea or coffee. The nurse will also perform routine post-operative checks.

As soon as you have recovered from the treatment, you will be able to go home. It is advisable that you have someone to drive you as you may be given a sedative, and so will not be able to drive yourself.

Are there any side effects?

Most procedures have a potential for side-effects. You should be reassured that, although all these complications are well-recognised, the majority of patients do not suffer any complications after this urological procedure.

Please see the information below and ask any question you may have with the nurse or radiographer on the day of your treatment if you are concerned.

Common (greater than 1 in 10)

- Bleeding on passing urine for a short period after the procedure
- Pain in the kidney as small fragments of stone pass after treatment (20%)
- Urinary tract infection due to bacteria released from the stone during fragmentation, requiring antibiotic treatment (10%)
- Bruising or blistering of the skin in the loin or on the front of the abdomen
- Need for repeated ESWL treatments (15 - 20%)
- Failure to fragment very hard stone(s) requiring an alternative treatment (less than approximately 14%)

Occasional (between 1 in 10 and 1 in 50)

- Severe infection requiring intravenous antibiotics (less than 1%) and sometimes drainage of the kidney by a small drain placed through the back into the kidney
- Stone fragments occasionally get stuck in the tube between the kidney and the bladder requiring hospital attendance and, occasionally, surgery to remove the stone fragments

Rare (less than 1 in 50)

- Kidney damage (bruising) or infection needing further treatment

- Recurrence of stones (less than 1%)

What should I expect when I get home?

When you get home, you should increase your fluid intake (approx 1 litre) to flush your system through this will help to reduce the risk of infection. Painkillers should be taken to help with the discomfort, following administration of the pain relief suppository (prior to the procedure you may take ibuprofen/diclofenac every 12 hours and paracetamol every 4 hours. (Please ensure you read the dose instructions that come with the medication).

It is expected that you may pass blood in your urine for several days after this treatment. If you develop bruising / blistering on your loin or on your abdomen, simple skin creams will usually ease any discomfort and the bruising normally resolves within 7 days. Superficial bruising is expected, any further concerns contact your GP or the Urology Department.

What else should I look out for?

If you develop a fever, severe pain on passing urine, inability to pass urine or worsening bleeding, you should contact your GP or the urology department immediately. Small blood clots or stone fragments may also pass down the ureter from the kidney, resulting in renal colic; in this event, you should contact your GP immediately.

The passage of stone fragment may continue for 6 - 8 weeks.

Are there any other important points?

You will be informed before your discharge of any follow-up arrangements. This will usually involve either further lithotripsy, (patients usually have two sessions of the treatment prior to review) operative surgery or a simple follow-up outpatient appointment when a further X-ray will be taken.

You can prevent further stone recurrence by implementing changes to your diet and fluid intake. If you have not already received a written leaflet about this, please ask the Nurse in outpatients or your consultant.

Who can I contact for more help or information?

Urology Nurse Practitioner, your Urology Consultant or your GP

Urology nurse practitioner 01284 713229 or 01284 712806

Other contacts

Patient Advice & Liaison Centre (PALS) Telephone 01284 712557

Chaplaincy Telephone 01284 713486

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