

KIDNEY STONES - LASER LITHOTRIPSY

What is Laser Lithotripsy?

Laser Lithotripsy is a non-invasive method of removing kidney stones that are:

- Too large to pass through the urinary tract; that is within the kidney, or
- Have entered within the ureter (tube that carries urine from the kidney to the bladder).

How is it performed?

CT scan and/or Ultrasound determine the location of the stone. An ureteroscope (small telescope) is introduced via the urethra (where urine leaves the body) to visualise the stone clearly up into the ureter or kidney (no incisions are made on the skin).

A tiny laser fibre is passed via the ureteroscope and delivers laser energy to slowly break and crush the stone into a fine powder.

Laser lithotripsy is usually a Hospital day case procedure; however you may require an overnight stay.

The procedure is performed under general anaesthetic, and usually takes between 30-60 minutes depending on the size and number of kidney stones.

You cannot drive home after the procedure; you must be collected from hospital.

All patients who have Laser Lithotripsy will have a Ureteric Stent inserted into the ureter to aid in:

- **The passing of the broken down, tiny pieces of stone out of the body in the urine.**
- **To assist healing while the ureter is inflamed from the procedure.**
- **Passage of any small blood clots.**
- **To help stretch the ureter.**

PLEASE NOTE: It is common to require more than one procedure to clear the stones.

What to expect following surgery:

A Ureteric Stent will be placed and removed in theatre, usually 1-2 weeks following the procedure.

The Ureteric Stent may cause the following:

- Pain and/or discomfort.
- Small amount of blood and small blood clots in the urine.
- Urinary frequency.

Please refer to the "Ureteric Stent" Information Sheet, for further reference.

Generally, we suggest taking 2 days off work after the procedure.

Panadol (or stronger) may be taken and the Doctor will discuss pain relief options with you.

A post-operative review with the Doctor will be made to assess your stone clearance, about 4 months following the procedure, with imaging.

Should you require additional support prior to that time, you are welcome to contact the rooms to organise a sooner appointment.

When to seek help:

Laser Lithotripsy is generally, a well-tolerated procedure; however, if you notice any of the following, you should see medical advice:

- Persistent or worsening pain. This is often due to the Ureteric Stent. It can often be treated with over-the-counter pain relief medications.
- Cloudy, smelly urine or a burning sensation when passing urine – this may indicate an infection.