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Ureteroscopy/Pyeloscopy & Laser stone & Stent insertion

This minimally invasive procedure is typically performed for treatment of a kidney stone either in the ureter or kidney.

The procedure will be performed in the operating theatre under a general anaesthetic.

A small telescope (ureteroscope) will be passed via the urethra (urine pipe) via the bladder into the ureter (tube connecting the kidney to the bladder)

If the stone is in the kidney, a smaller flexible ureteroscope/pyeloscope may be used to access the kidney.

A small laser fiber will be used to disintegrate the stone into very small pieces which will either be removed with a basket device or will pass in the urine

At the end of the procedure, in most instances a ureteric stent (double J) will be inserted to help the fragments pass. This is also required to allow any swelling of the ureter tube to settle. The stent is a plastic small tube which runs from the kidney down the ureter and coiled in the bladder.

The stent will not be visible, however you will likely be aware of the stent and have some minor discomfort from this. The stent will typically be removed within 2 weeks.

The whole procedure typically takes up to 1 hour depending on the volume of stone to be treated and will be either a day case or an overnight case.

Potential side effects/complications of the procedure are:

- Blood in urine - normal whilst the stent is in the body
- Dysuria – burning passing urine
- Frequency of urination
- Kidney pain from the stent whilst passing urine – this typically happens due to reflux of urine up the stent. This will settle once the stent is removed
- Urine infection
- Ureter injury – this is a rare but serious complication of the procedure. This is avoided by the use of the stent and if the ureter tube is too tight to allow the ureteroscope to pass easily, the stent will be inserted for a week to allow the ureter to dilate naturally and then the procedure can be performed safely. If a ureteric injury occurs, the stent may be required to remain in for 6 weeks. In very rare circumstances, an open operation may be required to repair a ureteric injury, however thankfully this is very rare