

Ureteroscopy

Urology department

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What is an ureteroscopy?

When you have an ureteroscopy, a miniature telescope examines your ureter and even your kidney.

Why do I need a ureteroscopy

Some urinary symptoms (water problems) are due to problems in the ureter. Sometimes the cause will be clear from x-rays, tests of the blood or urine, but sometimes the only way we can be sure what is going on is to take a look inside with a ureteroscope.

The ureteroscope allows examination of the whole length of the ureter. It usually allows any area of blockage (perhaps caused by a stone) to be seen easily.

Before your operation date you may attend a pre assessment. If so an appointment will be sent to you. A pre assessment appointment ensures that all the necessary investigations are carried out (blood pressure etc) before you have your operation.

The letter advising you of your operation date will also include important instructions with regards to the anaesthetic which will need to be followed.

The hospital usually arranges for you to come in the day of your operation. To reduce the risk of you getting an infection after the operation it is advisable to have a bath or shower before the operation.

On the day of your operation

You will be asked to put on a hospital gown before the operation and it is advisable to visit the toilet to pass urine.

It is essential that you remove all jewellery (the exception being your wedding ring which can be taped to your finger).

Remove your glasses, contact lenses, hearing aide and dentures (you may feel you need these until you reach the theatre, if so please tell the nurse).

Do take any regular medication that has been prescribed for you by your own doctor, unless you have been told otherwise.

During the operation

Under anaesthesia the surgeon will pass the telescope through the urethra and bladder, up into the ureter and if necessary as far as the kidney. The telescope can be used to examine the whole length of the tube from the bladder to the kidney. The operation can take from 30 minutes to two hours.

Usually you can go home the day after your operation, depending on how you feel. Before you leave, a doctor will see you again to tell you the outcome of the operation and to advise you of any follow-up if necessary. This will also give you an opportunity to ask any questions.

All normal activities can be resumed the day after you go home, you may go back to work when you feel well enough.

Do not drive a car for 48 hours.

Sexual intercourse can resume once you feel comfortable, usually the day after you go home.

Possible complications

Most procedures are straight forward but there are side effects. You may experience pain as the ureter is a long sensitive tube and it tends to bleed a little after the procedure. This can give rise to discomfort in your side. This discomfort can become quite painful if untreated so you may be kept under observation in hospital for 24 hours where you can be given pain relief. Mild pain at home can be controlled by pain relief tablets that you can buy from the chemist. If pain persists, please contact your GP.

The most common problem after a ureteroscopy is a water infection. The symptoms of this would be persistent pain on passing urine, cloudy or smelly urine and often a fever (high temperature). If you have any of these symptoms please contact your GP.

If you would like this leaflet in another format or in a different language, please ask a member of staff.

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