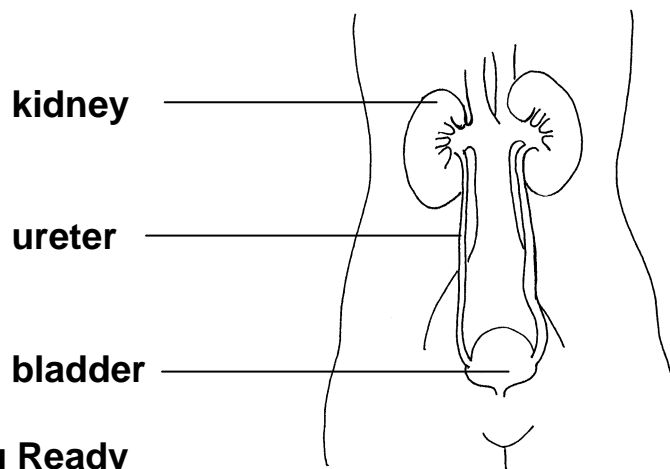

Nephrostomy Tube

when you have kidney stones

What is a nephrostomy tube?

As the kidneys make urine, the ureters take the urine to the bladder to be stored until you void. When a ureter is blocked by a kidney stone, urine builds up in the kidney instead of the bladder. This causes pain, inflammation and infection.

A nephrostomy tube is a narrow tube placed through the skin into the kidney to help drain urine, restore kidney function and provide an entrance into the kidney to take out the stone(s).



Step 1 – Getting Ready

You may need to come to the Pre-Admission Assessment Clinic before the procedure to have any blood work, X-rays and other tests your doctor orders. In this clinic, you will meet a nurse and anaesthetist to learn how to get ready and have your questions answered.

Bring all of your medications to the clinic so the nurses and doctor can see what you are taking. The anaesthetist will tell you what medications to take at home before the procedure.

You will come to the Day Procedure Unit on the day of your procedure. Here, you will be prepared for the procedure. You will have a thin tube placed in a vein in your arm called an intravenous or IV. This is used to give you medications and fluid. The nurses will answer any questions you have. When you are ready, you will be taken to the Diagnostic Imaging Department for the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

The procedure is done by a Radiologist. You will lie on your side so the blocked kidney is facing up. You will be given a local anaesthetic to freeze the area on your back while you are awake. Sedation and pain control medication are given through the IV in your arm.

The Radiologist then makes a 1 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch) incision in your back. You may feel pulling and tugging on your back when the tube is put in. A balloon at the end of the tube holds it in place. Stitches may be needed as well.

What can I expect after the tube is in?

You will be admitted to the Urology Unit and stay for 3 to 4 days. The nurses will give you pain control medication as you need it. You will also get an antibiotic medication to prevent infection.

Part of the nephrostomy tube comes out of your back. This tube drains urine into a bag. The bag needs to be kept lower than the tube site to allow proper drainage. The nurses measure the amount of urine you produce. The bag should be emptied when it is about $\frac{1}{2}$ full to prevent urine backing up into the kidney. You will also be able to pass urine if you have another kidney that works.

You will have a bandage over the incision. The tubing will be taped to your skin to prevent it from being blocked by a kink or being pulled out by accident.

Step 2 - Removing kidney stones

Now that you have a tube that goes into your kidney, the doctor has an easy way to get to the kidney stone. You will have a procedure called a lithotripsy to get rid of the kidney stone the day after the tube is put in. This procedure is done in the Operating Room and takes about 1 hour.

The night before the lithotripsy you cannot have anything to eat or drink. You will still have the IV in your arm to give you fluid, pain control medications and antibiotics.

During the lithotripsy, the doctor puts a special instrument through the nephrostomy tube and breaks up the kidney stone. You will go to the Recovery Room and then back to the nursing unit.

What can I eat after this procedure?

You can follow your normal diet. Your urine will have some blood in it. This should clear as you drink 4 to 6 glasses of water each day.

You should avoid drinking fluids containing caffeine such as tea, coffee and dark colas. Caffeine makes your kidney work extra hard and it is already working hard with the nephrostomy tube.

You should eat foods high in fibre and drink a lot of fluids to try and prevent constipation when you return home. Foods high in fibre include whole-wheat products, bran, fruits and vegetables.



What activity can I do when the tube is in?

You will get out of bed soon after the procedure. Your nurse will help you get up the first time and make sure the tube is secure. Sit and walk as much as you can to promote healing.

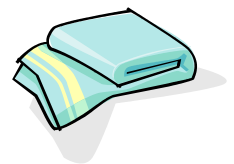
Getting up and moving helps:

- keep muscles strong
- prevent breathing problems
- prevent blood clots from forming
- prevent constipation
- promote healing

You can resume most of your normal activities. You cannot do any contact sports or heavy lifting for 2 weeks.

Hygiene

You can wash with soap and water in a basin at the side of your bed. You cannot have a tub bath because it will make the incision wet and put you at risk for infection.



Nephrostogram test

The nephrostomy tube will stay in for 2 more days. Before the tube is taken out, you will have an x-ray called a nephrostogram. This is done in the Diagnostic Services Department.

The doctor puts a dye into the nephrostomy tube. As the dye moves through the kidney, the doctor checks to see if the kidney stone is gone.

If the test is clear, the doctor will order the tubing be clamped. If there are no problems from the tube being clamped, the doctor will take the tube out. You have a dressing on the skin where the tube came out. You then have to sit upright for about 4 hours after the tube is pulled.

When do I go home?

Most people go home a few hours after the tube has been taken out and the site is healing. Healing is faster the more you get up and walk around. The nurse will check your skin often and will change your dressing when needed. Since you do not have any stitches in your skin, the nurse will check and tell you when you can go home. The skin can take up to 24 hours to heal but you may go home earlier with some dressing supplies.

When you go home you may have a prescription for pain control medication. You may also need to take an antibiotic medication to prevent infection. Make sure you take the antibiotic medication until all of the medication is gone.



At home

You can resume most of your normal activities. You cannot play any contact sports or lift anything heavy for 2 weeks.

You can have a bath 3 to 4 days after the tube has been removed. This is to prevent infection until the skin has healed completely.

You can shower if the skin is protected with a waterproof bandage and no water will touch the incision site.



Follow-up visit

When you are home make sure you make an appointment for a follow-up visit with your Urologist.



Contact your surgery, family doctor or health care provider if you notice

- increasing pain or swelling at the nephrostomy tube site
- blood in urine
- fever – temperature above 38°C

