

# Patient information sheet on laparoscopic stone surgery

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## Introduction

Most stones can be successfully treated either by lithotripsy (focusing shock-waves onto the stone to try to break it up from the outside) or by telescopic fragmentation. Large and hard stones can be difficult or impossible to treat in this way, necessitating open (cutting) surgery. Laparoscopic surgery is a relatively new (since 1992) alternative to open surgery which appears to be as effective but avoids the incision of open surgery, which usually results in a stay in hospital for 7-10 days and prevents a return to full activities for 6-12 weeks.

## Laparoscopic stone surgery

Before the laparoscopy an internal plastic tube (stent) will be inserted into the tube which connects your kidney and bladder (ureter) to act as a support. This is also necessary with conventional stone surgery. It is removed under a local (or general, if you prefer) anaesthetic 3 weeks after surgery. The operation is performed through 3 quarter to half inch cuts side near the rib cage. If it is difficult to perform the operation well using this approach it will complete it using a conventional traditional incision. The likelihood of this is approximately 5%.

## After the operation

You should expect some discomfort but this should be easily controlled using the pain-killers you will be prescribed. Most patients leave hospital between 2-4 days after the operation. Be sensible when you are at home - you will have had a major operation so you should not undertake strenuous physical exercise, even if you feel like it, until the stent has been removed. You may drive as soon as you think you could brake hard and swerve quickly to avoid an accident (typically 2 weeks).

## Follow-up

Your follow-up will depend on the procedure you have had and will be discussed with you before discharge.

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