

## Frequently asked questions

- Q. What is the advantage of ESWL as compared to other stone treatments?
- A. Primarily, it is completely non-invasive. Instead, energy from shock waves breaks down stones and fragments are passed down the ureter.
- Q. Are there disadvantages?
- A. Unfortunately not all stones will fragment successfully with ESWL as the fragility of the stone is dependent on many factors including size, location, and stone composition.
- Q. Can multiple stones be treated simultaneously with ESWL?
- A. Multiple stones can be treated; however, the number of shock waves delivered may be distributed amongst the stones therefore limiting the energy delivered to any one stone for fragmentation.
- Q. Will I need placement of an indwelling ureteral stent following ESWL?
- A. Most patients who undergo ESWL will not require a ureteral stent.
- Q. What is the overall success rate with ESWL?
- A. The success of ESWL is dependent on many factors such as stone composition, stone location within the urinary tract, patient body habitus (obesity), kidney anatomy, and type of ESWL machine used.

## Notes



## Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy

A non-invasive treatment for kidney stones

## What is Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy?

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy is a non-invasive method of treatment for kidney stones.

During treatment, shock waves from outside of the body are targeted at the kidney stone(s), causing fragmentation.

These stone fragments are then passed through the ureter and out of the bladder after the procedure.

Anesthesia will be administered for this treatment. Typical treatment duration is 45 minutes to an hour.

## Preparing for your ESWL

- You will be scheduled for a **pre-operative appointment 2 weeks** before your surgery to clear you for anesthesia.
- We will put in an order for you to get a **urine culture prior** to your pre-operative appointment. Please have this done at any Partners lab.
- **After midnight on the night before surgery, you may not eat any solid foods**, including candy, chewing gum, cough drops or mints.
- After midnight on the night before surgery, you can **drink clear liquids only**. Examples include water, black coffee, clear tea, apple juice, cranberry juice, and sports drinks.  
You **cannot** put milk in your coffee or tea, drink juices that contain pulp, or have any type of broths.

- If your doctor told you to take your medications on the day of surgery, you may take them with a small sip of water.
- **Consult your doctor about your medications.** You should stop all blood-thinning medications **7 days before** the procedure unless instructed otherwise by your doctor.



## What to Expect

The ESWL procedure usually takes no longer than 45 minutes. You will be put under anesthesia before the surgery. This means you will be deeply asleep and will not feel anything during the procedure.

Your doctor will break up the stones using shock waves sent from a machine outside of your body. Your surgeon will not make any cuts (incisions) on the outside of your body.

Once the procedure is over, you will be brought to the PACU (Post-Anesthesia Care Unit) to allow the anesthetic to wear off. You will be encouraged to drink plenty of water to flush out your kidneys.

## After your ESWL

- Once the anesthesia wears off, you will be able to go home.
- You can resume **normal activities** within one to two days.
- You will be encouraged to continue to **drink plenty of water** to pass the stone fragments.
- You may notice fragments passing for as long as 3 weeks after the procedure.

## Post procedure symptoms

These symptoms are **normal for several days after** your procedure:

- Cramps
- Blood in urine

These symptoms are **abnormal**—please call the Urology clinic if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Heavy bleeding
- Fever or chill
- Prolonged Pain