

Ureteroscopy

What is ureteroscopy?

It is a procedure in which a small scope (like a flexible telescope) is inserted into the bladder and ureter and it is used to diagnose and treat a variety of problems in the urinary tract. For ureteral stones, it allows the urologist to actually look into the ureter, find the stone, break it up with laser and remove the fragments. This is a day only procedure usually with a stent inserted at the end of the procedure (a tube that is placed in the ureter to hold it open).

Fragmentation of stones using laser lithotripsy and ureteroscopy is more assured for ureteric stones than with external shock wave lithotripsy (ESWL).

When is ureteroscopy used?

Most often ureteroscopy is used for stones in the ureter, especially for stones closest to the bladder, in the lower half of the ureter. It is the most common treatment of lower ureteral stones.

Will I be hospitalized?

Most often, it is a day-stay procedure unless there are complicating factors such as other medical conditions.

What are the risks?

There is a small chance of infection, bleeding, or injury to the ureter. If the ureter is too small, a stent may be left in place for one or two weeks to keep the ureter open and then the procedure is performed at a later date.

