



ESWL Pre- and Post- Operative Instructions

Extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy (ESWL) is a non-invasive treatment of stones located within the kidney or upper portion of the ureter (tube connecting kidney to bladder) using an acoustic pulse.

PREPARATION FOR DAY OF SURGERY:

- Review Anesthesia Guidelines given to you at last office visit. Strictly adhere to those instructions otherwise your surgery could be cancelled.
- The hospital *may* provide a specific soap to use for pre-operative cleaning/showering.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Make arrangements for someone to drive you home after surgery. A taxi cab is not an option. Call our office and speak with surgery scheduling if this is a problem.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE PROCEDURE:

You will be completely asleep through the use of anesthesia (unconsciousness induced by drugs). An anesthesiologist will monitor your vital signs throughout the entire surgery. During the procedure, your stone(s) are broken into "stone dust" or fragments that are small enough to pass in the urine. Periodically, your doctor will pause the shocks and take an x-ray of your stone. The machine will then be adjusted if necessary so that it stays in line with the stone. This is continued until the stone is completely fragmented or the maximum number of shocks is reached. The treatment takes approximately 45-60 minutes. A stent, or hollow tube, may be placed within your ureter to keep it open allowing for passage of fragments post operatively. This is typically only done for stones that are 1 centimeter or larger, or if significant fragments remain after the treatment.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER THE PROCEDURE:

Diet

You may return to your normal diet after surgery. Mild nausea and possibly vomiting may occur in the first 6-8 hours following surgery. This is usually due to the side effects of anesthesia and will resolve soon. We suggest clear liquids and a light meal the first evening following surgery.

Activity

It is recommended that you take it easy for the 24 hours following surgery as you may still have some residual effects from the anesthesia. You may resume all normal activity 24 hours after surgery. You may note an increase in blood in the urine with more strenuous activity. If this occurs, reduce activity and increase fluids until blood decreases. **Blood will be seen in the urine intermittently for up to 4 weeks after surgery; this is normal.** See below for concerning signs.

You need to strain your urine for 5-7 days following surgery or until you notice a significant decrease in collected fragments. Bring collected stone material to post-op appointment. Be sure to obtain a strainer from the surgical facility; otherwise, you can use a coffee filter to strain.

Wound

There are no incisions made during the procedure. You may note some soreness and/or bruising over the flank area. This will resolve over the course of 5-7 days.

Hygiene

You may take a shower or bath immediately after surgery.

Medications

In most cases, you will be sent home with a prescription pain pill. If the pain medication you are sent home with does not control the pain when being used as directed on bottle, call your doctor. While taking prescription pain medication, it is recommended you also take a stool softener such as Docusate Sodium (Colace, Dulcolax) to counteract the constipating effects of the pain medication.

If the pain is not too bad, you may take over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen). Avoid Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatories (NSAIDs) such as Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Advil, Aleve, and Motrin, for 72 hours after surgery because they may cause bleeding.

FAQs

- *What happens if the stone doesn't break up completely?* If larger fragments remain within the kidney or ureter after treatment, an additional treatment can be done a few weeks later; or, your surgeon may recommend a different type of surgery for definitive treatment.
- *What can I expect if I have a stent?* A stent can cause UTI-like symptoms including burning with urination, flank pain that is worse with voiding, frequency, urgency, and rust-colored urine.

Problems to Report

- Fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
- Pain not managed with prescription pain medication despite using it as directed on bottle.
- Bright red ("cherry Kool-Aid") color urine that is seen throughout the entire stream with no improvement after 24 hours of limited activity and increased clear liquids.
- Clots in the urine that are the size of a quarter or larger.
- Difficulty voiding urine after surgery.
- Drug reactions such as a rash or vomiting. If difficulty breathing occurs, go directly to the ER.

Follow-Up

Our office should call you within one business day to set up your first follow-up appointment. This visit is to check your progress, collect any retrieved stones, and review a repeat x-ray (KUB). It is usually set up 2-4 weeks after surgery.

Contact Information

If you need to contact Alaska Urology for post-operatively concerns, please contact the clinic you visited (Anchorage: 563-3103, Palmer: 745-9300). If your symptoms are severe and/or very concerning, ask to speak with nurse triage. If symptoms are mild to moderate or of low concern, ask to speak with your doctor's assistant.