

Shock wave treatment to break kidney stones (ESWL, Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy)

Before the shock wave treatment, your urinary tract and the location of the stones are assessed by imaging. If the kidney stone is large, ESWL-therapy is carried out while you are an inpatient at the department of urology. In this case, a stent is inserted under endoscopy guidance into the ureter before the shock wave treatment to guarantee free flow of urine.

Procedure

- The treatment device produces an electric burst that generates a shock wave. This shock wave is directed directly at the kidney stone. The stone is localized with the help of sonography (ultrasound) or fluoroscopy. The shock wave causes the kidney stone to crumble but does not affect the body. During the procedure you will be lying on your back or stomach on a treatment table.
- The treatment does not usually cause much pain, and general or local anesthesia is not needed.
- If needed, you will be given medication to relieve anxiety and pain.
- The procedure takes about 0.5–1 hour.

After the procedure

- After the treatment you may move around and eat normally.
- The stone fragment will exit your body with the urine, which means that it is important that you drink plenty of fluid.
- As the stone fragments exit you may experience occasional pain and your urine may be blood-stained.

Discharge

- Usually, patients are discharged on the day of treatment.
- If you are an inpatient, discharge is usually on the next day.
- The need for sick leave is minimal.

Follow-up

- The treatment result is checked with radiography 1 and 3 months after the procedure.
- If stones are still present in the urinary tract, another round of shock treatment may be given. If the stone is very big, 2–3 treatment rounds may be needed. The treatments

are repeated at intervals of a few months. Occasionally, shock treatment is complemented with endoscopy of the kidney or ureter.

Please contact the clinic

- If you experience severe pain or fever during your convalescence.