

## Diseases And Conditions



### **Question:** Kidney Stone Removal

**Answer:** Kidney stones vary in size and shape. A small kidney stone may pass through your urinary tract on its own, causing little or no pain. A larger kidney stone may get stuck along the way. A kidney stone that gets stuck can block your flow of urine, causing severe pain or bleeding. Here are three different kidney stone removal methods.

- Shock wave lithotripsy blasts the kidney stone into small pieces. The smaller pieces of the kidney stone then pass through your urinary tract. A doctor can give you anesthesia during this outpatient procedure.
- Cystoscopy and ureteroscopy. During cystoscopy, the doctor uses a cystoscope to look inside the urethra and bladder to find a stone in your urethra or bladder. During [ureteroscopy](#), the doctor uses a ureteroscope, which is longer and thinner than a cystoscope, to see detailed images of the lining of the [ureters](#) and [kidneys](#). The doctor inserts the cystoscope or ureteroscope through the [urethra](#) to see the rest of the urinary tract. Once the stone is found, the doctor can remove it or break it into smaller pieces. The doctor performs these procedures in the hospital with anesthesia. You can typically go home the same day.
- Percutaneous nephrolithotomy is a procedure in which the doctor uses a thin viewing tool, called a nephroscope, to locate and remove the kidney stone. The doctor inserts the tool directly into your kidney through a small

cut made in your back. For larger kidney stones, the doctor also may use a laser to break the kidney stones into smaller pieces. The doctor performs [percutaneous nephrolithotomy](#) in a hospital with anesthesia. You may have to stay in the hospital for several days after the procedure.