

Urethral stent placement



Procedure: This minimally invasive procedure is performed under anesthesia. A guidewire is advanced from the urethra and into the bladder. Measurements are taken to select the appropriate stent width and length. The stent is then positioned across the obstruction, and deployed with fluoroscopic guidance.

Indications: Most frequently used for relief of urethral obstruction secondary to urothelial carcinoma (UC; also called transitional cell carcinoma [TCC]). Patients with traumatic strictures may also be candidates.

Patient eligibility (species, size, gender): Dogs whose distal urethra can accommodate the stent deployment device (typically 6Fr in size).

Cost: \$6,000-7,500 for stent and placement. Pre-procedure care for patients unable to urinate may add substantially to this cost.

Length of stay: Patients are usually discharged the following day.

Complications: The biggest complication is incontinence (~25% of patients). In addition, discomfort during urination, urinary tract infections, tumor growth through the stent, and stent failure or dislodgement are possible.

Anticipated outcome: Median survival times for dogs with UC managed with a stent alone are < 3 months, although outcomes may be improved by adjunctive therapy. We have less information about outcomes for dogs with traumatic strictures, and prefer to place temporary (removable) stents in these patients.

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