

## **Metabolic Screening in Kidney Stone Disease**

Dear Patient

Your urologist has referred you for “metabolic screening” in connection with your kidney stone disease. The programme based at the Royal Free Hospital is one of the largest in the country and has a great deal of expertise in this area. This letter explains why you have been referred, what you can expect us to do for you, and how you can help achieve this.

### **Why have I been referred when I’m already being seen by a urologist?**

Normally, your urologist will continue to follow you up from the point of view of actually treating any further stone episodes. The purpose of this additional clinic visit is to find out the reason **why** you are forming stones in your kidneys or urinary tract. You have been referred because your urologist felt that there was a good chance that we may be able to find an underlying cause.

### **What will happen to me in this clinic?**

We will ask you questions relating to your stone disease, medications (including those not prescribed by a doctor), lifestyle, current diet and fluid intake and information regarding any family members also affected with stone disease. We will perform blood tests and then ask you to perform at least two 24-hour urine collections into large plastic bottles (we will explain how to do this). You may already have had some of these tests in advance of this clinic (see below). We may also ask you to complete a “diet diary” either on paper or online to gain further information on your dietary habits, as this can have a major impact on your risk of stone disease.

We also carry out research into why people form kidney stones. You may be asked if you wish to take part in this (if so, it will be explained separately and in detail). Your participation is entirely voluntary and agreeing or declining will not in any way affect the care you receive.

### **Why have I been asked to perform urine tests before attending the clinic?**

You may have been asked to perform these urine tests in advance of your first clinic appointment. This will save time and allow us to give you more useful information about your condition and more effective treatment when you are seen. It is very important that you submit samples that are complete and properly collected well in advance of your clinic appointment. We realise that it is sometimes difficult to find time to do this (it takes 2 whole days of urine collections) - if that is the case, just call the secretary and ask for your appointment to be rescheduled or delayed to better suit you.

### **What will happen after I’ve attended the clinic?**

Our aim is to find out what is causing your kidney stones. Up to 50% of kidney stone patients will form another stone in the next 10 years, so we take a long-term view. We use the information and test results to devise a plan to try and reduce your chances of forming further stones in the future. This underlying cause could be:

- a medical condition which can be corrected with the right treatment
- a genetic defect which can not be cured but can often be treated (and this may also help other family members)

- no specific cause found, but stones are mostly due to diet and lifestyle (we can give initial advice on how to make suitable changes).

However, please note that we are not always successful in finding an exact cause for your kidney stone disease – if that happens we will tell you, and suggest general advice on how to reduce your risk.

Whatever the outcome, we will write to you in detail with an individualised treatment plan. We will ensure that you fully understand the recommendations given, and that you have the opportunity to ask any questions.

It is possible that you may require long-term follow-up (for example if you also have poor kidney function) and this may happen either with your GP or another hospital clinic. Remember that further stone symptoms or stone episodes would still be looked after by your urologist, not by this clinic.