

Does it pass through the sheath? A fast empirical method of sizing the stone fragments during laser lithotripsy in digital flexible ureteroscopy

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INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES: Stone fragments removal during flexible ureteroscopy is a key issue in order to obtain the stone clearance. Still, it is a time consuming procedure. The goal of our study was to imagine a fast method to approximate the optimal size of the stone fragment that allows passage through the ureteral access sheath.

MATERIAL & METHODS: We used a digital flexible ureteroscope (Storz XC), a 230 µm laser fiber, a 10/12 and a 12/14 Fr ureteral access sheath (ReTrace, Coloplast) and a 1,9 Fr nitinol stone extractor (RocaStone Tipless, Rocamed). After we placed stone fragments of different sizes into a plastic jar filled with saline, we introduced the ureteroscope with the laser fiber tip out at optimal working length, which was established in previous studies as 1/4 of the screen image. We placed the tip of the fiber in contact with the stone fragments, we evaluated the stone/screen image ratio and we extracted the fragments with the basket through the access sheaths using the nitinol basket.

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RESULTS: When a 10/12 Fr sheath is used, the fragment size must not be larger than half of the screen image in order to easily pass through the sheath

When a 12/14 Fr sheath is used, the fragment size must not be larger than 2/3 of the screen image in order to easily pass through the sheath.

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