Economic Aspects of Morbidity Caused by Ureteral Stents

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OBJECTIVE
To assess the economic burden of temporary ureteral stenting.

METHODS
The German version of the ureteral stent symptom questionnaire was completed by 74 patients with unilateral inserted indwelling stents. Cost accounting was performed considering the costs of ureteral stents, drugs, consultation of healthcare professionals, hospitalization, stent extraction and work incapacity due to stent-related problems.

RESULTS
Total costs arising from stent-related problems amounted to US dollars (USD) 133,355, median USD 455 (113-11,948) for the entire stent indwelling time, and USD 15 (4-398) per patient per day. Costs (USD total/median (range)) arose mainly from work incapacity (104,154/0 (0-11, 498)), followed by healthcare professional consultation (9,177/0 (0-612)), drug costs (8,736/111 (0-427)), stent material (8,390/113), stent removal (2,235/0 (0-1,769)) and outpatient hospital care (663/0 (0-663)). Most patients also showed a reduced capacity for work due to symptoms associated with indwelling stents.

CONCLUSION
The economic burden of morbidity associated with indwelling ureteral stents is considerably high and should be taken into account when performing ureteral stenting, especially in cases where it is not strictly indicated and when stent removal is scheduled.

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