

YAN CHAI HOSPITAL BOARD AND TSUEN WAN ADVENTIST HOSPITAL LAUNCH CHARITABLE EXTRACORPOREAL SHOCK WAVE LITHOTRIPSY PROGRAM TO HELP NEEDY PATIENTS

[October 16, 2013, Hong Kong] Yan Chai Hospital Board and Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital (TWAH) announce the launch of ‘Yan Chai Hospital Board - Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital Charitable Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL) Program’ to provide fully or partially sponsored ESWL services to the patients suffering from urinary stones and financial in need, so that they can receive early treatment.

Urinary stones are a common urban disease

Urinary stones are a common health problem in Hong Kong. It refers to the calculus occurring in the kidney, ureter, bladder and urethra. Symptoms varying significantly between patients, with some patients experiencing no discomfort, while others may develop hematuria and serious waist pains that severely hamper a patient’s daily life. The most common types include calcium oxalate stones, mixed calcium oxalate and calcium phosphate stones, infection stones and uric acid stones.

In the past, open surgery was the only treatment procedure for urinary stones. With the advancement in medical science, ESWL, which reduces the damage brought of traditional surgery, is now available as a treatment. More importantly, this new procedure allows for early treatment when stones are smaller in size.

Adventist Hospital hopes patients will now receive early treatment

As stated by Dr. Frank Yeung, the CEO and President of TWAH at today's signing ceremony, "following last year’s ‘Charitable Cardiac Services Program’ jointly launched with Yan Chai Hospital Board to provide free diagnosis and treatment for cardiac patients in need, the two parties have again worked together to launch a new initiative, the ‘Charitable ESWL Program’”. He said, ‘as with our past charitable program aimed at helping the patients financial in need, the objective of this new charitable program is to enable those suffering from urinary stones to receive early, appropriate treatment for rapid recovery.’

Some qualified patients will receive free treatment while others get a discount

With the approval of Yan Chai Hospital Board, the program shall provide free ESWL at TWAH to 20 qualified patients who satisfy certain criteria and pass a means test (please see table for details); and patients referred by public hospitals will receive an 20% discount on the cost of the procedure.

Yan Chai hopes to raise public awareness and attention

Vice-chairman of Yan Chai Hospital Board Mrs. So Chan Wai-hang hopes the program will help enhance cooperation between public and private hospitals in Hong Kong and also provide the public with an alternative treatment choice other than services offered at public hospitals. Raising public awareness of urinal

stones is also very much an aim of the program, as Mrs. So explains: ‘We hope high-risk people can identify the urinary stone problems through early diagnosis which could help improve treatment efficacy and outcomes.’

TWAH Chief of Medical Staff and urologist Dr. Chan Lung Wai appeals to patients to understand the importance of early diagnosis and treatment. Taking kidney stones as an example, he explains urinary stones may bring many serious consequences. He says: ‘Kidney stones are crystallized sediments accumulated in the kidney. The common causes include low fluid intake and low urinal volume as well as there being too many impurities in the urine. In addition to the possibility of causing frequent urination and painful urination, such stones may cause blockage of the kidney and ureter leading to serious pain and possible kidney damage which may result in very serious injury to patients.’

Delayed treatment of kidney stones may cause uremia and renal failure

Dr. Chan noted some patients diagnosed as having kidney stones may choose to ignore the problem and maintain their existing dietary habit and lifestyle if there is no pain. Some even misunderstand that it is better to wait until they begin to feel pain before deciding to have ESWL. The effectiveness and success rate of treating kidney stones depend mainly on the size, the hardness/density and the location of the stones, as well as the number of stones presents. However, by ignoring a diagnosis a patient potentially is allowing the stones to grow, become harder and multiply, thereby increasing the difficulty of treatment and, if left too late, ruling out the option of a patient receiving extracorporeal lithotripsy.

In a clinical case, a 19-year-old female university student felt pain on the right side of her waist, leading her to vomit three times during a flight from the U.S. to Hong Kong. A Computed Tomography (CT) scan performed after she landed found she was suffering from serious right-sided hydronephrosis caused by a severe blockage of her right kidney as a result of urinary stones. After two days of hospitalization, the student had a high fever and suffered from septic shock. She was later diagnosed as having pyonephrosis which required urgent drainage of pus and minimally invasive laparoscopic nephrectomy.

In another case, a 52-year-old man noticed blood in his urine and was diagnosed by a family doctor as having hematuria. A CT scan performed at the hospital found there was a 4-millimeter ureteral stone causing a slight blockage requiring ureteroscopy +/- laser lithotripsy.

In a third case, a young girl around 10 years old had drunk cola and other high sugar beverages each day after school for several months. She suddenly felt severe pain around her lumbar vertebrae and vomit one day. She was taken to an emergency room by domestic helper and diagnosed as having an ureteral stone problem at an advanced stage.

In conclusion, Dr. Chan stressed that successful treatment of urinary stones requires a complex treatment plan that would often include ESWL and various minimally invasive surgical techniques complement to each other.

While treatment plans differ from patient to patient, early diagnosis and treatment, together with a disciplined diet, can enhance the effectiveness of a treatment and reduce the risk of having urinary stones.

Doctor reminds us to drink more water and eat less animal organs

Dr. Chan reminds us that we should drink more water, and eat less animal organs and seafood, and if we do develop symptoms, to inform a doctor immediately as ‘caught at an early stage, urinary stones can largely be treated effectively by ESWL.’ Dr. Chan also expects the program will raise awareness of urinary stones and give more people the confidence to get an early diagnosis and receive early treatment.

Table: Application Details for Charitable ESWL Program

A qualified patient is someone who meets the following conditions:

- Hong Kong permanent resident.
- Low income in accordance with the criteria set by the Yan Chai Board.
- Suffers from urinary stones, has been assessed by a urologist at a public hospital that may require Lithotripsy Services and has a referral letter from a urologist of a public hospital.
- On the Hospital Authority's register of patients waiting for Lithotripsy Services.
- Assessed by an urologist of TWAH as fit for the free Lithotripsy Services.
- Non-emergency case.

About Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital

Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital, the only non-profit private hospital in Tsuen Wan, has been serving its community since 1964. It is one of the 170 hospitals in the world established by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Hospital has been providing outstanding care in family medicine as well as specialist services in obstetrics, gynecology, , surgery, pediatrics and orthopedics.

With better diagnostic facilities and backup support of a wider range of specialist services, the Hospital is moving ahead to provide services in different specialties to meet with demands of the community.

Media Enquiry

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