

Post Lumbar Puncture Discharge Instructions

A lumbar puncture (also called a spinal tap) is a procedure to collect and look at the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. During a lumbar puncture, a needle is carefully inserted into the spinal canal in the back. The results of your lumbar puncture are usually ready about 1-2 days after your test. Your healthcare team will notify you of your test results.

How should I feel after the procedure?

You may feel sore at the needle insertion site. You may develop a headache. Patients usually have very few side effects after the procedure.

What should I do at home?

- If you have any soreness when you get home, take two tablets or caplets of 325mg acetaminophen (**Regular** Strength Tylenol®) every 6 hours.
- To help prevent a headache you can drink a beverage containing caffeine such as tea or coffee.
- If you do develop a headache you should lay flat with your feet elevated above the level of your heart.
- Have someone at home check the site for bleeding every 6 hours for the next 24 hours. If there is bleeding, apply firm pressure on the site for 10 minutes.
- Avoid getting the insertion site wet for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours you may shower and change the bandage. In 48 hours you may remove the bandage.
- Avoid strenuous activity and do not bend at the waist for 48 hours after the procedure. After 48 hours you may resume normal physical activity.
- Drink plenty of fluids especially water. Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours after the procedure.

When should I call my healthcare team?

If you experience any of the following, please call your healthcare team at 732-235-2465.

- Increased redness and/or swelling at the site
- Fever greater than 100.4° F within 48 hours of the procedure
- Headache not relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and/or lasts more than 6-8 hours after the procedure
- Nausea and/or vomiting within 48 hours of the procedure
- Neck stiffness or severe pain in the neck or back
- Sensitivity to bright lights within 48 hours of the procedure
- Unusual or bloody drainage at the insertion site
- Inability to urinate
- Numbness, tingling or weakness in your lower back or legs

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS:

If you are in need of immediate assistance, please call 732-235-2465 and select the option that best meets your needs.