



LUMBAR PUNCTURE DISCHARGE EDUCATION

Information:

A lumbar puncture (also called a spinal tap) is a procedure to collect and look at the fluid (cerebrospinal fluid, or CSF) surrounding the brain and spinal cord.

During a lumbar puncture, a needle is carefully inserted into the spinal canal low in the back (lumbar area). Samples of CSF are collected. The samples are sent to the lab for evaluation. The pressure of the CSF also is measured during the procedure.

What should I expect after the Lumbar Puncture?

- You should lie flat either on your back, stomach, or side for 1 hour post procedure to decrease the risk of developing a post Lumbar Puncture headache. The longer you remain flat following the procedure the better in prevention of developing a headache.
- You may develop a headache during the first few hours after your procedure that may last for several days. The headache may be mild to severe and may get worse when you sit or stand. The following may help ease a post-lumbar puncture headache:
 - Drink more liquid than usual after your lumbar puncture due to the removal of fluid during the procedure. Caffeine may be used to treat a headache. Drinks such as coffee, tea, or some soft drinks have caffeine. Caffeine is also available over the counter in tablet form. Ask about using caffeine to treat your headache. Do not drink alcohol. Alcohol can make your headache worse.
 - Lie down or rest to ease your headache pain.

Bathing & Wound Care:

- You may shower after 24 hours; do not tub bath or submerge in water for 3 days (bath tub, hot tub, swimming pool, river or any other body of water). Band-aid may be removed at **24 hours**
- Apply a warm compress to affected area for comfort as needed.
- If the site(s) become red, tender, swollen, or starts to drain, contact us.
- Avoid heavy lifting and strenuous activity until for 48 hours.

Follow-up visit information:

Call your primary doctor after discharge for a follow-up appointment if you don't already have one. Follow up with Interventional Radiology is not routinely necessary.

If you received Conscious Sedation (IV sedation) and are discharged the same-day:

- You must have someone drive you home when you leave the hospital.
- For 24 hours after your procedure, do not do anything where you need to be mentally alert. This includes making important decisions, operating machinery, signing important papers, etc.
- Eat light for the first 24 hours, and then start eating more as you are able. Drink plenty of fluids.
- If you are taking pain medications:
 - Take as directed
 - Do not drink alcohol while taking narcotic pain medication
 - Do not drive
 - If you are constipated, drink more fluids and eat more fiber. You can also use an over-the-counter stool softener.

Occasionally, a situation will require prompt attention and an emergency room visit is necessary:

- You have a severe headache that does not get better after you lie down.
- A fever of 100.3 or above.
- You have a stiff neck or trouble thinking clearly.
- Your legs, feet, or other parts below the waist feel numb, tingly, or weak.
- Bleeding or a discharge coming from the area where the needle was put into your back.
- Severe pain in your back or neck.

With these urgent situations, please call Medford Radiology to see what your best course of action is.

For any questions please contact Oregon Interventional Radiology at 541-618-5801

In all emergency situations call 911