



## Lumbar Puncture Discharge Instructions

A lumbar puncture (also called a spinal tap) is a minimally invasive, image-guided diagnostic test that involves the removal of a small amount of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). Cerebrospinal fluid is a clear, colorless liquid that delivers nutrients to and cushions the brain and spinal cord.

### Aftercare Instructions

- A friend or relative will drive you home after your exam.
- Rest quietly for the rest of the day and avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours. This helps reduce the incidence of a headache.
- Eat your normal diet.
- Drink additional fluids after the procedure. This helps replace the CSF that was withdrawn during the spinal tap and reduces the chance of developing a headache.
- Try not to cough, sneeze, strain or make quick movements for 24 hours.
- You may remove any bandages before going to bed.
- You may take a shower. Do not take a bath or sit in a hot tub for 24 hours.
- If you are taking a blood thinner like aspirin, Plavix, Pradaxa, Xarelto, Coumadin, Lovenox, among others, you may resume taking it.
- You may develop a headache after a lumbar puncture that begins several hours or up to 2 days after the procedure. In addition to significant head pain, the headache may be accompanied by nausea, vomiting and dizziness and can last from a few hours to a week or more. The headache may be more severe when you are sitting or standing, and relieved with lying down.
- A pain-relieving medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) can help reduce a headache following the procedure.
- If your headache is severe, contact your physician.
- **Your ordering physician will receive the results of the lumbar puncture within 24-48 hours and should contact you with the results, or you can contact your physician.**

**Please call your ordering doctor or primary care physician if you notice any of the following:**

- Significant pain at the site unrelieved by Tylenol

- Hematoma or painful lump around the site
- Fever greater than 100.6°F
- Redness or drainage at biopsy site
- Continued nausea and vomiting
- Headache that persists more than 2 days

### Seek **EMERGENCY CARE** if you have:

- Chest pain
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Confusion or change in mental status
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Progressive swelling of any area
- Severe abdominal pain or bloating
- Dizziness or feeling like you are going to pass out
- Changes to bowel or bladder function
- Severe headache (when lying down)
- Weakness
- New numbness or tingling
- Change in sensation
- Impaired movement
- Severe new pain
- Seizure

**If you have an emergency, go directly to the nearest emergency room or call 911. Do not wait to contact our staff.**

Please call Teton Radiology at 208-524-7247 Idaho Falls, Rexburg 208-356-4888, or your ordering physician if you have problems or concerns.

---

(Patient name - Please print)

**Your radiologist was:**

---

**I understand the above information.**

---

(Patient or family member's signature)

Date

**Reviewed with me by:**

---

(Technologist or nurse)

Date

Resources: <http://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info.cfm?pg=spinaltap>

Lumbar\_Puncture\_Discharge\_Instr Rev 8/19