

Care After a Lumbar Puncture (Spinal Tap)

Lumbar Puncture

You had a lumbar puncture, which is a procedure to get a sample of the cerebral spinal fluid from around your spinal cord.

Activity Level

- You will lie down for 60 minutes or longer before you leave the hospital or clinic.
- You should have someone stay with you or be available to help you for 12 hours after the exam.
- Do not do any heavy activity or exercise for 24 hours after the procedure.
- It is recommended that you rest for the remainder of the day. Lie flat on your back in bed with as little activity as possible.
- You may get up to use the bathroom and sit up to eat.
- Do not go to work until tomorrow.
- Do not drive until tomorrow.
- You may take a shower but do not bathe for 24 hours after the procedure.
- After 24 hours, you may return to your normal activities as you are able.
- Do not swim or sit in a hot tub for 24 hours.

Diet

- Return to your normal diet.
- Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.

Your Health Care Provider

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

- It is important to drink a lot of liquids for the first 8 hours after the procedure, unless your health care provider gave you other instructions.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages for at least 24 hours after the procedure.

Medicine

- Return to your normal medicines (including pain medicine). Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.

Site Care

- Bandages were placed over the injection site after the procedure.
- It is important to keep the injection site clean and dry.

Headache from the Lumbar Puncture

- The most common side effect from a lumbar puncture is a headache. If you get a headache and if the headache gets better when you lie flat, you will need to rest flat in bed for an extra 24 hours.

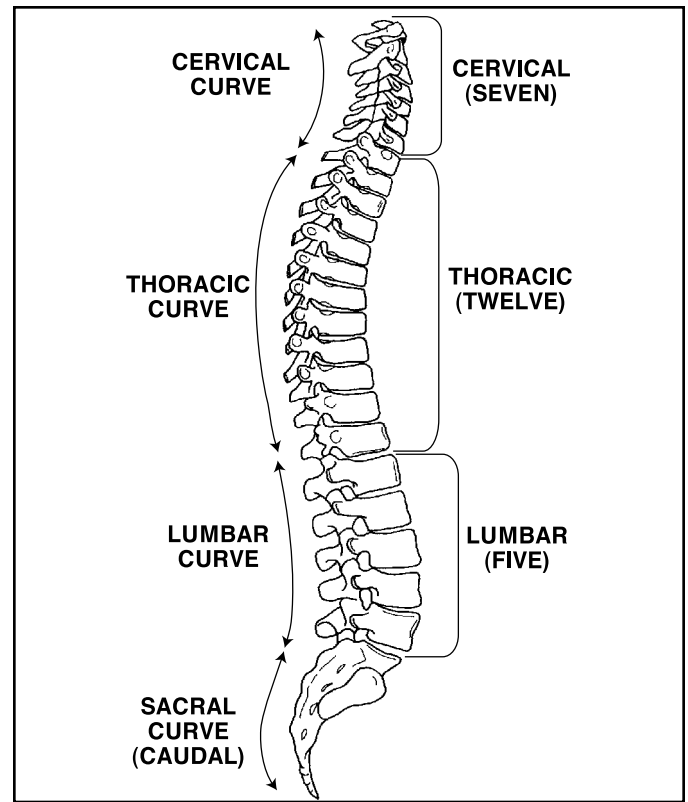
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- Drink extra liquids, unless your health care provider gave you other instructions. This will reduce the chance you will get a headache.
- If the headache is severe or does not get better by lying flat and drinking extra fluids, you may have a spinal fluid leak. Call your health care provider or the facility where you had the procedure.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- nausea (upset stomach) with vomiting (throwing up)
- severe headache
- feeling very sleepy or confused
- pain, swelling, redness or drainage at the puncture site
- chills or a temperature of 101 F or higher
- any questions or concerns.



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The labeled parts of the spine.