

Lumbar Puncture (Spinal Tap)

General Information

A lumbar puncture is a procedure to get a sample of the cerebral spinal fluid from your spinal cord.

The procedure takes about 30 minutes. Plan to be at the hospital or clinic for 2 to 4 hours.

What To Tell Your Health Care Provider

Tell your health care provider if you:

- have any allergies to medicine or latex
- are pregnant
- take a blood thinner, such as warfarin (Coumadin[®])
- **have diabetes.** Ask for an early morning appointment and talk to your health care provider about your medicine needs.
- take any other medicines. Check with your health care provider to see if you have special medicine instructions.

Before the Procedure

- Please arrange to have someone drive you home. **You will not be able to drive after the exam.** You should have someone stay with you or be available to help you for 12 hours after the exam.
- If you had X-rays or other tests taken at a different facility, please arrange to have them sent to the hospital or clinic where you are having your procedure.

Your Appointment

Location: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____ a.m. / p.m.

Plan to spend at least _____ minutes / hours at the facility.

Phone number: _____

If you need to cancel or reschedule, call at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment.

- Bring a list of your medicines and doses with you to the hospital. Include all prescription, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal or natural products.
- Take your usual medicines as directed by your health care provider.
- Unless your health care provider gives you other directions, you may eat a light breakfast the morning of the procedure. Drink up to four 8-ounce glasses of liquids, unless you receive other directions.
- Please follow any instructions you receive from your health care provider.

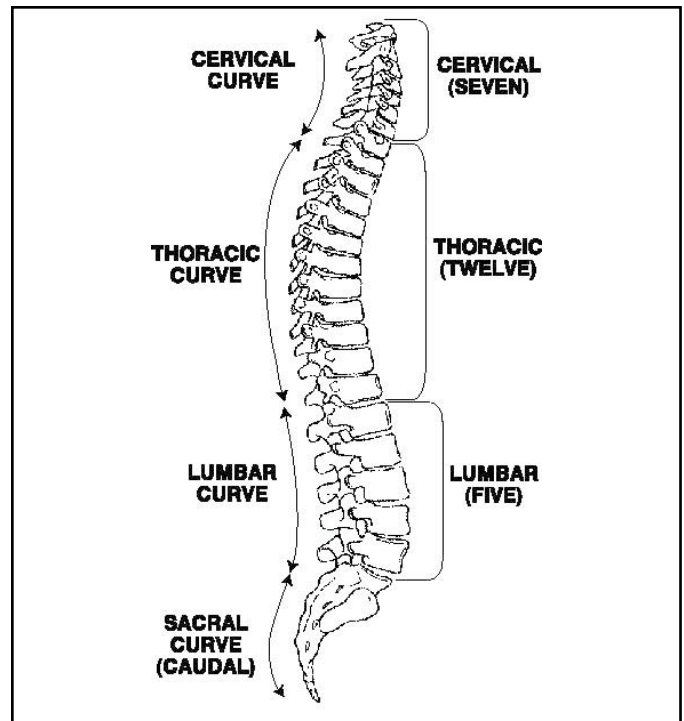
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During the Procedure

- You will wear a hospital gown.
- You will be positioned on the exam table.
- The health care provider will apply a numbing medicine to the injection site on your back.
- A needle will be carefully inserted into your spinal canal.
- A sample of spinal fluid will be collected. (The sample will be sent to the lab for testing.)
- You may feel some discomfort.
- It is important that you do not move during the procedure.

After the Procedure

- You will lie down for 60 minutes or longer before you leave the hospital or clinic.
- Do not do any heavy activity or exercise for 24 hours after the procedure. Stay as quiet as possible, resting for the remainder of the day. Stay in bed with as little activity as possible.
- Do not lie flat in bed. Raise your head with two pillows. This will reduce your chance of getting a headache. You may get up to use the bathroom and sit up to eat.
- Do not return to work until the next day.
- After 24 hours return to your normal activities.



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The labeled parts of the spine.

- Drink up to four 8-ounce glasses of liquid, unless your health care provider gave you other directions.
- Take your usual medicines (including pain medicine). Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.

Follow-up Results

- Your health care provider will receive the exam results. He or she will use the procedure results to help plan your treatment. Your health care provider will either talk with you about the results or mail you the results.