

Lumbar Puncture Day Case

Information for patients

This leaflet aims to answer common questions about lumbar puncture procedure. If you would like further information or have any worries please ask your doctor or nurse.

You can eat and drink normally before your procedure.

In all cases the doctor will explain the procedure to you and answer any questions you may have & also discuss any risks, side effects & what to look out for.

Before your procedure you can carry on taking medication you have been prescribed unless you are contacted by the doctor or Rehab Day Unit staff. If you take anticoagulant blood thinning medication please inform the doctor or nurse.

Before the procedure can be carried out you will need to sign a consent form to say you understand and agree to it.

In most cases if you wish it will be possible for a friend or relative to accompany you for part or all of the procedure. Please ask your doctor or nurse.

What is a lumbar puncture?

A lumbar puncture is a means of safely obtaining a sample of fluid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord. This fluid is described as cerebro-spinal fluid or CSF. Once the fluid is collected it is sent to the laboratory for tests which can help determine the cause of your neurological symptoms.

How is it done?

The procedure is carried out in one of the treatment rooms in the day unit. A doctor does the procedure with a nurse also present.

You will be asked to either lie on your side in a curled up position or to sit up leaning forward on some pillows.

The doctor will use an antiseptic cleaning solution to prepare your lower back for a local anaesthetic injection to numb the area ready for the procedure.

This stings a little at first but then makes the area numb.

A very fine needle is then inserted into your lower back to obtain the fluid. You may be aware of a pushing sensation and experience some slight discomfort.

Because the skin is numb most people do not experience pain but may have a sharp feeling in the back or leg when the needle is inserted.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- **Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available**
- **If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111**
- **Keep the environment clean and tidy**
- **Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.**

Once the needle is in place the doctor will obtain the fluid samples and may also measure the pressure. This is done by attaching a special tube to the needle which measures the pressure of the fluid.

If at any time the procedure becomes too uncomfortable please inform the doctor or nurse.

The procedure usually takes approximately 30 minutes.

When the procedure is complete the doctor will remove the needle and a plaster is put over the area.

After your lumbar puncture

Following the procedure you will be asked to remain in bed and lie flat for two hours. This is to minimise the occurrence of headache following the lumbar puncture. You may then be able to sit up and walk around. Before discharge the doctor will decide if you are ready to go home. You will usually be able to return home after two-three hours. You must have someone to take you home.

Are there any side effects or risks from lumbar puncture?

Headache is a common side effect which usually occurs within 48 hours although it can start later. In the majority of cases the headache is mild and goes away on its own but on rare occasions some people experience a more severe headache. Headache can last for two – eight days and you might also feel sick, dizzy, have some ringing in your ears and mild visual problems. It can be made worse when sitting, standing, coughing or straining. You may also experience some mild neck or lower back pain.

If you experience these symptoms lie down and take the pain killers recommended by the doctor to ease these symptoms.

Advice following lumbar puncture

- Do not drive for 24 hours
- Rest for the first 24 hours avoiding bending. This will help minimise the risk of headache.

Avoid sport and exercise for the first week minimise the occurrence of the side effects.

During the first 48 hours try to drink three litres of water or squash a day. This will help to minimise the risk of headache, You may have a bath or shower after 24 hours and remove the plaster on your back.

Contact your GP or NHS 111 If you experience any of the following after your lumbar puncture:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Fever
- Swelling and redness around the injection site
- Clear fluid or blood leaking from the lumbar puncture site
- Photophobia (bright lights hurting your eyes)
- Headache causing distress and is not improved by lying flat in bed or taking pain killers.
- Problem passing urine that was not experienced before the lumbar puncture.

In an emergency dial 999

If you require any further assistance or advice please do not hesitate to contact the rehabilitation day unit.

Useful Telephone Contact Numbers:

- Rehab Day Unit: 01543 576024 9am - 4 pm.
- New Cross Emergency Department: 01902 307999 and ask operator for the Emergency Department
- NHS 111.

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。