



Patient & Family Guide
2018

After Your Lumbar Puncture

Aussi disponible en français :
Après votre ponction lombaire (FF85-1949)



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After Your Lumbar Puncture

Today you had a lumbar puncture. A needle was placed in your back to collect cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). This fluid surrounds your brain and spinal cord. The CSF will be sent to the lab for testing. The results of this test may help your health care provider to diagnose a particular disease or injury. It may take several days or weeks before the results are available.

Care at home

Care of the puncture site

You will have a bandage where the needle entered your back. This can be removed 12 to 24 hours after the procedure.

Headache

Some patients (about 10-30%) have a headache after their lumbar puncture. To help with a headache:

- Lie down.
- Drink extra fluids.
- Take acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (e.g., Advil®), as told by your health care provider.
- Drink the same amount of caffeine as usual to avoid caffeine withdrawal, which can make your headache worse.

- For each beverage with caffeine that you drink, also drink at least one beverage without caffeine.
- Do not drink caffeine if your health care provider has told you to avoid it.

If your spinal headache continues, and it is not helped by bedrest, fluids, or pain-relieving medications, call your health care provider or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

Diet

You can go back to eating and drinking normally after the procedure.

Back discomfort

You may have back discomfort after your lumbar puncture. To help with back discomfort:

- Apply ice wrapped in a towel for 20 minutes, 3 to 4 times for the first day after your procedure.

Bathing

- Do not take a tub bath for 24 hours after your procedure.
- Do not use a hot tub or whirlpool bath for 24 hours after your procedure.
- You may take a shower on the day of your procedure.

Driving

Do not drive for 4–6 hours after your procedure.

For 24 hours after the procedure:

- Do not do any strenuous (hard) activities.
- Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds.
- Do not bend.
- Do not do anything that causes you to strain.
- Do not strain while going to the bathroom.

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:

- Increased pain, redness, or swelling at the puncture site.
- A headache that gets worse, and is not helped by lying down.
- A fever or a temperature higher than 38°C (100°F).

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.