

Self-Care After Your Lumbar Puncture

What to do and what to expect

This handout gives basic self-care instructions to follow after your lumbar puncture.

For 24 Hours

- Do **not** drink alcohol.
- Do only light activities and get plenty of rest.
- Do **not** lift anything that weighs more than 10 pounds. (A gallon of water weighs about 8 pounds.)
- You may shower as usual. You may want to cover the puncture site with a Band-Aid to keep it dry.

What to Expect

- It is normal to have some discomfort or a bruise at the puncture site for several days after your lumbar puncture.

When to Call

Call one of the numbers in the “Questions” box on this page if you:

- Have a headache that lasts longer than 24 to 48 hours, or that gets worse when you move
- Have a fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C)
- Have a stiff neck
- Feel dizzy or lightheaded
- Have trouble thinking clearly



Call one of the numbers in the “Questions” box if you have any of the symptoms listed here.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Who to Call

Weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 pm., call 206-598-9467.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the Neurology resident to be paged.

Follow-up Care

Each person’s follow-up care is unique. Follow the instructions you were given by the health care provider who did your lumbar puncture.