

Lumbar Puncture (LP) Care Information

How to take care of yourself after an LP:

It is very important for you to RELAX, avoid alcohol and drink plenty of fluids following the LP. Please don't engage in strenuous activities such as repeated bending, heavy lifting, vigorous walking, housework, gardening, jogging, bike riding, tennis, golf, etc.

The amount of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) taken will be replenished in 1-3 hours following the LP. However, it is still important for you to take it easy for the remainder of the day, and the day following the LP.

Possible side effects of an LP:

The most common problem after an LP is mild back soreness. This often occurs because of the position you have been in during the LP. A headache, which can range from mild to severe, can also result from having an LP. A mild headache may feel like any other headache you have had before. A **severe** headache, though very uncommon, would be painful when sitting, standing, walking, or bending over. However, when you are lying down, the headache lessens. In addition to the severe headache, you may also experience vomiting, ringing in your ears, or dizziness.

What to do if you experience a headache following an LP:

If you experience a mild headache following an LP, it is often relieved by drinking plenty of fluids, lying down to rest, caffeine, or taking Tylenol, aspirin, or ibuprofen at the dose you would normally take for a headache.

What to do if you experience a severe headache following an LP:

During ADRC business hours, please contact the ADRC lab team at 858-822-4800.

Outside of business hours, please contact Dr. Doug Galasko at UCSD's pager system at (619) 543-6737. If Dr. Galasko is unavailable, ask for the neurologist on call. A blood patch procedure can be scheduled to relieve your headache. This involves injecting a small amount of blood into your LP site. It forms a patch over the lumbar puncture site and your headache will be immediately relieved. Remember, lying down will temporarily relieve the pain associated with the headache.

- **For serious medical concerns, please contact Dr. Galasko at the number above.**
- **For all other questions or medical inquiries, please call the main SMADRC at (858) 822-4800.**