

Are There Any Complications?

- It may not be possible to get any fluid and we may have to try again.
- There may be slight bleeding from the site afterwards but the risk of serious complications are extremely small. If you notice any blood or are worried please inform staff.
- Some children may have a headache or back ache following the test. Pain relieving medicine can be given if needed.

If there are any other questions you wish to ask please do not hesitate to ask the doctor or nurse looking after your child.



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Patient Information Leaflet



Lumbar Puncture Fact Sheet for Parents



THE ADELAIDE & MEATH
HOSPITAL, DUBLIN
INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL
CHILDRENS HOSPITAL

Statement of Values

Respect - Caring -
Openness - Partnership -
Teamwork Fairness &
Equality

What is a Lumbar Puncture?

A lumbar puncture (sometimes referred to as a 'spinal tap' or LP) is a procedure that is carried out to obtain a sample of the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). This fluid covers the brain and the spinal cord.

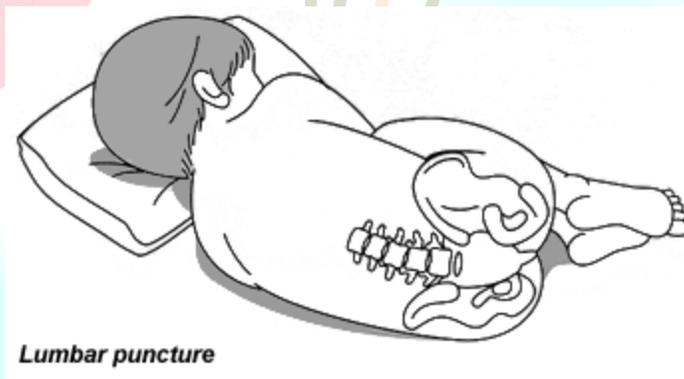
Why is a Lumbar Puncture done?

- A lumbar puncture is usually carried out to detect possible meningitis and to measure the levels of chemicals in the CSF. It is a very safe test.
- The reason that your child is having a lumbar puncture will be explained to you by the Doctor looking after your child.

How is a lumbar puncture carried out?

- If you wish you will be able to stay with your child to comfort him/her and encourage him/her to remain as still as possible.
- The lumbar puncture is carried out by inserting a needle through the skin in the lower back into the space where the CSF flows.

- Your child may lie on his/her side or older children may sit up. A nurse will help the child to stay in this position.



Lumbar puncture

- The CSF comes out through the needle and a few drops are collected in specimen bottles and sent to the laboratory for testing.
- A sealing spray will be applied to your child's back and then a plaster will be placed over the area.

Does It Hurt The Child?

- It is an uncomfortable test. Your child will be held still, some children do not like this and cry.
- We can help to numb the skin with some cream or with an injection. We may also be able to give your child some medicine to make them less scared and worried. This medicine will make him/her sleepy. The child will be awake during the test but will not remember it clearly.