



## **Lumbar Puncture Discharge Instructions**

**No driving for 24 hours:** You are not to drive yourself home from the procedure or for the remainder of the day.

**Activity:** Following your procedure, you will need to lie down the rest of the day. You must lie completely flat for the first hour. After the first hour, you may elevate your head with a small pillow, but you need to remain in a flat position. You may lie on your back, side, or stomach, as long as your head and shoulders are not elevated above the level of your hips. You may get up briefly to eat, drink, and use the restroom only. You may resume regular activities the day after the procedure. No heavy lifting over 15 pounds and no strenuous activity for 3 days. You should try to lie as flat as possible during the car ride home, while wearing your seatbelt.

**Hydration:** Drink plenty of liquids unless you are on fluid restrictions. This will help your body heal and replenish the fluid samples removed during the procedure. Avoid alcohol, but caffeinated beverages (coffee, tea, soda, etc.) are acceptable. You should drink extra fluids for a minimum of 24 hours following the procedure.

**Puncture Site:** Keep the puncture site dry. Sponge bath only on the night of the procedure. You may remove the dressing and shower 24 hours after the procedure. Do not scrub the site, gently clean and pat dry. Please do not fully submerge the procedure site under water for 1 week (no tub baths and no swimming).

**Pain Control:** It is common to experience mild soreness in the muscles and soft tissues of the lower back. You may take Tylenol for pain. You may take Advil or Ibuprofen 2 days after the procedure unless contraindicated. Blood thinners may be resumed 2 days after the procedure or as instructed by prescribing physician. You may also use a heating pad or cool pack if desired.

**Spinal Headache:** Following your procedure, your body will need to heal the area where the needle was placed. While healing occurs, it is possible to develop a headache that worsens when standing or sitting upright. This headache is not like a regular headache, as it will not improve with the use of normal headache medicines. If you develop a headache that worsens with activity, we advise you continue to lie flat for an additional 24 hours and increase your fluid intake. If the headache persists after an additional 24 hours of rest and hydration, contact our office. In some cases, you may be referred for an additional outpatient procedure called a Blood Patch, which can be done to alleviate headaches and aid in your body's healing process.

**Call us *immediately* if you experience any of the following:**

- ❖ Persistent headache that worsens when upright
- ❖ Temperature greater than 101°F
- ❖ Increasing redness, swelling, or bleeding at the procedure site
- ❖ Nausea or vomiting
- ❖ Dizziness or lightheadedness
- ❖ Progressive or worsening pain with or without activity
- ❖ New onset of numbness, tingling, weakness in the legs

**If you have any questions or concerns, please call  
Radiology Associates of Atlanta at 404-352-1409**