

Introduction

Cerebral Spinal Fluid (CSF) obtained through lumbar puncture may be the only test to confirm the diagnosis in certain diseases of the nervous system such as infection of the coverings of the brain (meningitis) or brain tissues (encephalitis), bleeding and tumours of the brain and the spinal cord.

The Procedure

1. You will be instructed to lie on your side, curled up to a head-knee position.
2. The procedure is performed under local anaesthesia with germ-free technique at a space between two lumbar vertebrae, CSF pressure will be measured and 5-10ml of fluid will be collected for laboratory analysis.
3. The puncture wound will be covered with dressing.
4. Please relax throughout the procedure which usually lasts less than 30 minutes.

Preoperative Preparation

A written consent is required.

Postoperative Instruction

Wound care

1. You are advised to lie flat in bed with one low or no pillow under your head for 6-12 hours.
2. If you find the dressing is wet, inform your nurses. New pressure dressing will be applied.

Diet

Drink more water to prevent headache. If headache occurs, inform your nurses for painkillers.

Common Risks and Complications (not all possible complications are listed)

1. Wound pain / Wound infection.
2. Bleeding
3. Headache which can usually be controlled by painkillers.
4. Very rarely, cerebral herniation may lead to brain stem damage.
5. Paraplegia of lower limbs might rarely occur due to accumulation of blood clots pressing on the nerves.

Things to take note on discharge

1. Contact your doctor or a nearby Accident & Emergency Department if you find the followings: increasing pain or redness around the wound and discharge from the wound.
2. Take analgesics prescribed by your doctor if required.
3. Resume daily activity gradually.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor. Evangel Hospital reserves the right to amend this leaflet without prior notice. We welcome suggestions or enquiries on the information provided in this leaflet. Please contact our Healthcare professionals so that we could follow up and make improvement.

Reference

Hospital Authority: "Information Sheet of Lumbar Puncture" (2022)

Smart Patient: https://www.ekg.org.hk/pilic/public/Paed_PILIC/Paed_LumbarPuncture_0077_eng.pdf (24-07-2023)