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Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

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Neonatal Lumbar Puncture
Parent Information Leaflet

Parent Information

What is a Lumbar Puncture?

A lumbar puncture (LP) is a common medical procedure carried out to obtain a sample of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). CSF surrounds the brain and spinal cord. When an LP is carried out a small hollow sterile needle is inserted into the lower back to collect a sample of this fluid. The fluid is collected in small bottles and sent to the laboratory for testing.

Why does my baby need a Lumbar Puncture?

Collecting and analysing CSF may provide the medical team looking after your baby with useful information about whether the brain may be affected by a medical condition. The medical team looking after your baby will explain to you the specific reason an LP will need to be performed. LPs are generally carried out for one of the following reasons:

- To detect possible infection in the CSF
- To measure the level of chemicals in the CSF
- To measure the pressure in the CSF
- To reduce the pressure in the CSF

What are the risks of a Lumbar Puncture?

Complications following an LP are extremely rare in babies and the risk of any serious complications including bleeding, infection and damage to nerves is extremely low. Your baby may experience a headache or some tenderness/discomfort at LP site following the procedure. Sometimes the medical team performing the procedure may be unable to obtain any CSF, and it may be necessary to repeat the procedure.

What happens to my baby during a Lumbar Puncture?

The LP will be performed by a member of the medical team who is trained to do so. Your baby will be held in either a side lying or sitting position in order to perform the LP and will be monitored throughout. A lumbar puncture can be an uncomfortable procedure, and so steps will be taken to keep your baby comfortable. A local anaesthetic cream will be applied prior to the procedure to numb the area and promote comfort.

Parents are welcome to stay with their baby during the procedure if they would like to and will supported by staff to provide comfort to their baby.

When will we get the results of the Lumbar Puncture?

Following an LP, the CSF samples will be sent to the laboratory for testing. Some of the tests are routine and others are more specialised. Routine results will be available 24-48 hours after being received in the lab. The medical team will be able to advise you as to when all the final results can be expected.

Aftercare

Following the LP a small dressing will be placed over the LP site at the bottom of your baby's back, this can be removed with the baby's next nappy change. It is advisable to keep your baby lying flat for 60 minutes following the LP to promote comfort.

Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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