

## WHAT IS A LUMBAR PUNCTURE?



### LP BASICS

A lumbar puncture, or LP, is when a small bit of spinal fluid is taken from your back and examined under a microscope to learn more about your body's health.

### STEP ONE

You will be instructed to lay on your side with your knees tucked up to your chest, just like a cat curled up in a ball.



### STEP TWO

You will feel your doctor touching your back with their hands to find the best place for the procedure. You may feel gentle pushing.

### STEP THREE

You will stay curled in a ball while your doctor changes their gloves. This is a good time to check on your breathing. Take slow, deep breaths.



### STEP FOUR

A blue cloth will be placed on your back. Your doctor will clean your back with a soapy sponge 3 times. This will feel cold, wet, and scratchy.

### STEP FIVE

Your doctor will gently slide a tiny needle under your skin to give you numbing medicine. The medicine might sting, but that feeling should go away in about 10 seconds.



### STEP SIX

A needle is inserted into your spinal cord to collect fluid. You may feel pushing but you should not feel anything sharp. If you do, let your doctor know.

### STEP SEVEN

Collecting even a small amount of fluid takes some time. Your job is to keep holding as still as you can.



### STEP EIGHT

Once the fluid is collected, your doctor will take the needle out, clean your back with a wet cloth, and place a band-aid where the needle was.

### STEP NINE

You will lay flat for a little while to make sure you don't get a headache.



### HELPFUL HINTS

Your most important job is to hold as still as you can. You can listen to music, have your grownup read you a story, or hold someone's hand during the procedure.