

The Spine Column

A Special Newsletter for MVP Health Care[®] Members **Issue 1, 2022**

Using Correct Body Movement for Low Back Pain

You have back pain, and you also have housework to do, children to take care of, and errands to run. When you can't find someone else to do a chore or task for you, keep these important rules in mind:

- **Bend forward carefully.** When you must bend forward for certain tasks, bend carefully in a way that doesn't cause pain
- **When you lift, use your leg and stomach muscles.** Try to have these muscles do all the work. And keep whatever you lift as close to your body as you can
- **Try not to make any twisting movements.** If you need to turn, move your whole body in the direction you need to go instead of twisting
- **Take rest breaks.** Don't do any one type of movement for too long without taking a break. And try to switch between chores so you're not doing the same movement (even with breaks) for a long time
- **Do it later.** If it hurts too much to do the chore, put it off until you feel better

Contact Us
1-866-942-7966
Monday–Friday,
8:30 am–5 pm
TTY 711

We Value Your Opinion

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at mvp-listens.com.

We will use this information to create a better experience for all of our members. All responses are 100% confidential. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.

MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with chronic back pain. For more information or to see if you qualify, call 1-866-942-7966. MVP's program is based on the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement's (ICSI) health care guidelines for the treatment of adult low back pain. This program must be coordinated with your physician.



Using Medicine for Low Back Pain

Medicine can reduce low back pain and decrease muscle spasms in some people. But it works best along with other treatments, such as walking and using heat or ice.

For best results:

- Take pain medicine exactly as directed
 - If your doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if an over-the-counter medicine would be a good choice for you
- Learn what the risks and side effects are before you take any pain medicine
- Take pain medicine soon after the pain starts or on a regular schedule
- Don't take more than one kind of medicine unless your doctor has told you to



If your doctor advises, you can take over-the-counter pain medicine. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen and naproxen may work well for low back pain. If you can't take NSAIDs, your doctor may recommend acetaminophen. Be safe with medicines. Read and follow all instructions on the label.

If you have been prescribed a muscle relaxant or an opioid for severe pain, carefully follow your doctor's advice. For more information on proper opioid use, visit [mvphealthcare.com/opioids](https://www.mvphealthcare.com/opioids).



Movement in Focus: Side Stretch

Stretching the muscles in your back can help relieve pain and increase flexibility. This makes it easier for your muscles to keep your spine in a good, neutral position. Start this exercise slowly. Ease off if you start to have pain.

1. Stand comfortably with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Raise one arm over your head, and then lean to the other side.
3. Slide your other hand down your leg. As you do this, let the weight of your raised arm gently stretch your side muscles.
4. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
5. Repeat 2 to 4 times on each side.

Check with your doctor to make sure this stretch is right for you.

Get Lab Tests **Collected at Home**

As an MVP member,* you have access to at-home lab test collection through our collaboration with Scarlet Health®. Scarlet® makes it easy to get routine bloodwork, urine tests, and many other lab tests collected where it's most convenient for you. Simply upload your lab order and schedule your appointment. If you need a lab order, you can request one from your provider, or start with Gia®, MVP's 24/7 virtual care services, to be connected with a provider who can assess your health needs and order your lab test. Learn more at mvphealthcare.com/labs.

*For MVP members age 10 and over.

Quick Tips for Your Next Appointment

Patients who have good relationships with their doctors are more satisfied with their care and have better results. Whether your appointment is in-person or virtual, here are some tips to help you and your doctor become better partners in improving your health care:

- Write down your questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get asked and answered
- Bring a “health history” list with you and keep it up to date
- Always bring any medications you are taking, including over-the-counter, or a list of those medications (including when and how often you take them) and their strength
- Bring someone along to help you ask questions and remember the answers

Find more information and printable forms at mvphealthcare.com.

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)



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Our Health Library is your one-stop resource for the latest health information. Visit mvphealthcare.com and select *Members*, then *Health & Wellness*.



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Preventive Care is the Best Care

Health care screenings help prevent or find illnesses and diseases in their earlier stages when treatment is more effective. If you've put off your screenings, you're not alone, but now is the time to catch up. To find out if you are due for screenings, *Sign In* to your MVP online account at mvphealthcare.com/member and select *Preventive Care Reminders*, and talk to your doctor.

Living Well Programs

MVP offers a variety of classes and workshops—both in-person and virtual—to help you live well physically, emotionally, and otherwise! Find programs like yoga, walking clubs, caregiver support, or even a cooking class. To find a class visit mvphealthcare.com/LWCcalendar. Filter by county to find the programs nearest you.

