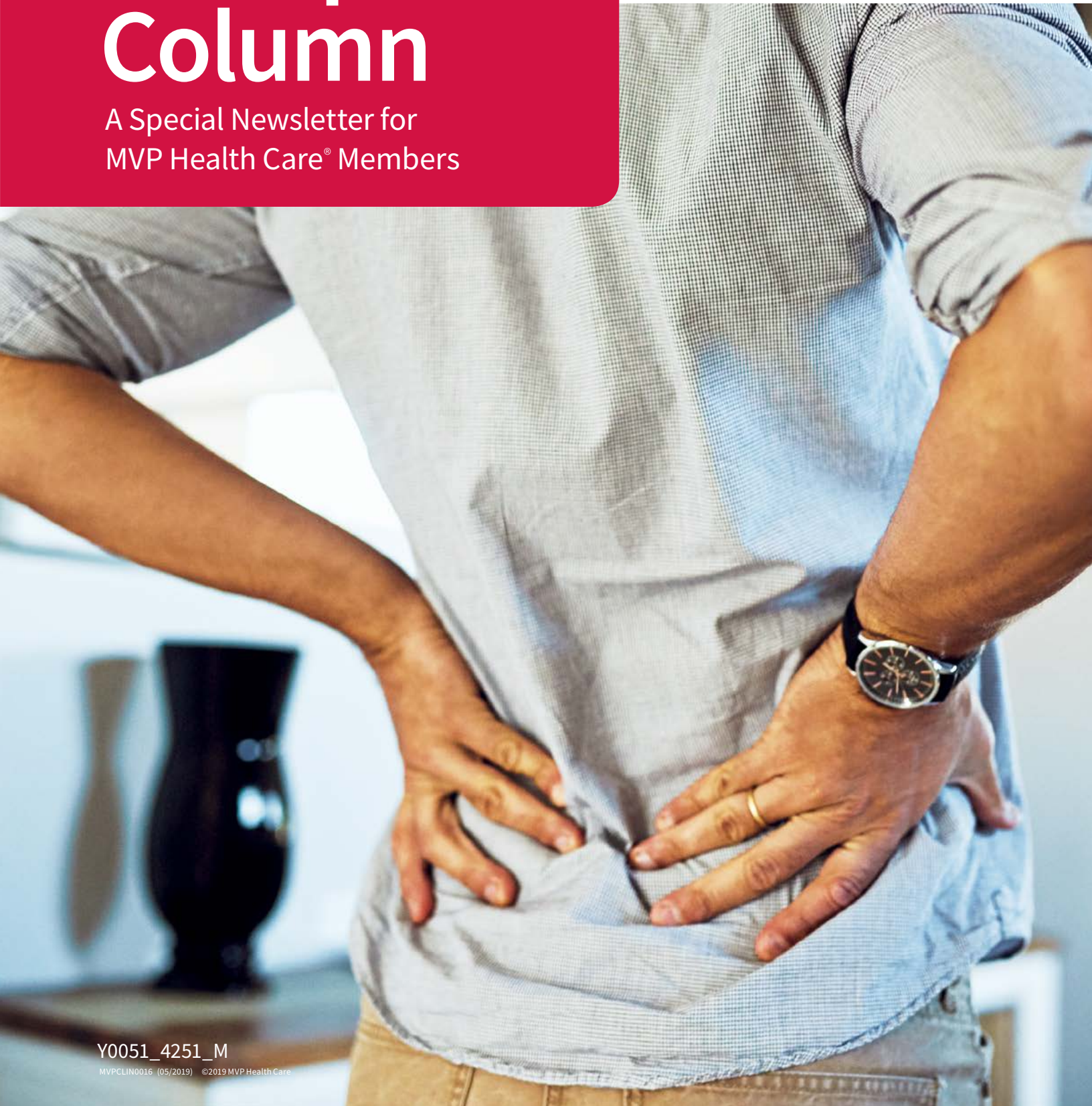


The Spine Column

A Special Newsletter for
MVP Health Care[®] Members



First Aid for Low Back Pain

When your back aches, follow these helpful tips to get some relief.

Keep Moving

If you can, walk for 10 to 20 minutes at a time every two to three hours. Walk on level surfaces, not on hills or stairs. Walk quickly if you can and swing your arms as you walk.

Lying down for too long can make back pain worse. Sitting can make it worse too. Change positions every 30 minutes. If you must sit for long periods of time, take breaks. Get up and walk around or lie flat to gently stretch your back.

When you do lie down, protect your back on the way down. And learn the sleeping positions that protect your back.

Movement Tips

- When a movement hurts, go gently.
- When moving into a lying-down position, keep your back straight.
- Don't sit up to read or watch TV in bed. Use your bed only for lying down.
- Sit on firm seating. Look for chairs with armrests for lowering and raising yourself.
- When you first get up in the morning, wait 40 to 60 minutes before doing any vigorous exercises.

Ice and Heat

There is no rule about using heat or ice for back pain. You can try each to see which works best for you.

Medicine for Pain

Pain medicine can help you recover from low back pain by controlling it during rest and activity. For best results:

- Learn what the risks and side effects are before you take any pain medicine.
- Take pain medicine soon after the pain starts, on a regular schedule. Follow the instructions on the label.
- Don't take more than one kind of medicine unless your doctor has told you to.

Ask your doctor if you can take over-the-counter pain medicine. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen and naproxen seem to work best for low back pain. But if you can't take NSAIDs, you can try acetaminophen (Tylenol, for example). Be safe with medicines. Read and follow all instructions on the label.

If you have been prescribed a muscle relaxant, carefully follow your doctor's advice.

©2019 Healthwise, Incorporated, reprinted with permission for personal use only. Content shall not be further distributed. This information does not replace the advice of a doctor. MVP Health Care and Healthwise disclaim any warranty or liability for your use of this information.



How can I properly lift without hurting my back?



- Keep a wide base of support. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart, with one foot slightly ahead of the other (karate stance).
- Squat down, bending at the hips and knees only. If needed, put one knee to the floor and your other knee in front of you, bent at a right angle (half kneeling).
- Maintain good posture. Look straight ahead, and keep your back straight, your chest out, and your shoulders back. This helps keep your upper back straight while maintaining a slight arch in your lower back.
- Slowly lift by straightening your hips and knees (not your back). Keep your back straight, and don't twist as you lift.
- Hold the load as close to your body as possible, at the level of your belly button.
- Use your feet to change direction, taking small steps.
- Lead with your hips as you change direction. Keep your shoulders in line with your hips as you move.
- Set down your load carefully, squatting with the knees and hips only.

©2019 Healthwise, Incorporated, reprinted with permission for personal use only. Content shall not be further distributed. This information does not replace the advice of a doctor. MVP Health Care and Healthwise disclaim any warranty or liability for your use of this information.

MVP has online resources available 24 hours a day to help you take charge of your health.



Make informed decisions about your health by using the Healthwise® Knowledgebase—our online Health Encyclopedia. Curious about the medications you take every day? Visit [mvphealthcare.com](https://www.mvphealthcare.com) and select *Members*, then *Health & Wellness*. The MVP Healthwise Knowledgebase is your one-stop resource for the latest health information.

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.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

Health benefit plans are issued or administered by MVP Health Plan, Inc.; MVP Health Insurance Company; MVP Select Care, Inc.; and MVP Health Services Corp., operating subsidiaries of MVP Health Care, Inc. Not all plans available in all states and counties.



Contact Us

For more information, call

1-866-942-7966

Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm

TTY: **1-800-662-1220**

We value your opinion.

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at [mvplistsens.com](https://www.mvplistsens.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.



Quick Tips for Being Prepared to Talk to Your Doctor

Patients who have good relationships with their doctors are more satisfied with their care and have better results. Here are some tips to help you and your doctor become better partners in improving your health care:

- Write down questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get answered.
- Bring an up to date “health history” list with you.
- Always bring any medications you are taking, including over-the-counter, or a list of those medications (include when and how often you take them) and what strength.
- You might want to 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)

Are you due for important health screenings?

Regular screenings are important to help maintain your overall health. For screenings that are appropriate for your age and sex, visit **mvphealthcare.com/preventivecare** and talk to your doctor.