

Medical Spine Specialist Evaluations: Information for HealthPartners Members

I've been asked to have an evaluation with a Designated Medical Spine Specialist. What kind of a specialist is that?

Designated Medical Spine Specialists are non-surgical clinicians with advanced training in spine care. They're trained in physical medicine and rehabilitation, occupational medicine, sports medicine or related fields. They specialize in helping people who are considering surgery for low back pain.

What will happen at my evaluation?

Your specialist will perform an in-depth assessment of your back problems, help you understand all of your treatment options and connect you with resources to help you decide next steps that are right for you.

Why has HealthPartners adopted this approach?

Chronic low back pain is one of the most common reasons that people seek care. There's growing evidence that many patients with back pain can be treated without surgery. This approach is designed to help make sure you know about your options so you can make decisions that are right for you.

How soon will I be able to have my evaluation?

Specialists in the network will provide fast access to evaluations -- within two to 10 working days.

Where can I have my evaluation?

The network serves most locations in Minnesota as well as parts of Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota. You can find a list of specialists and locations by visiting healthpartners.com, clicking the "Health & Wellness" tab and clicking the "Low back pain" link. Or, you can talk with a Member Services representative at the number listed below.

What can I expect after my evaluation?

Your specialist will discuss the results with you, review your treatment options and recommend next steps for you to consider. You may choose whether or not you feel the recommendations are right for you.

What is my next step after that?

It's up to you. After your evaluation, you may choose the treatment options that you feel are best, including having a consult with a spine surgeon if you wish. You should discuss your options with your primary care physician.

Who should I call if I have questions?

Please call the HealthPartners Member Services phone number listed on the back of your ID card. Or call 952-883-5000, 800-883-2177 or 952-883-5127 (TTY).

For more information and a list of Designated Medical Spine Centers and Specialists, visit the Health & Wellness tab at healthpartners.com and click "Back pain."