

INTRODUCTION:

Back injuries are considered one of the most painful and costly problems plaguing the workplace today. Back Injuries are second only to the common cold for lost time on the job.

CHECK THE OBJECT BEFORE YOU TRY TO LIFT IT

- Test every load before you lift by pushing the object lightly with your hands or feet to see how easily it moves. This tells you about how heavy it is.
- Remember, a small size does not always mean a light load.

IS THE LOAD YOU WANT TO LIFT PACKED CORRECTLY?

- Make sure the weight is balanced and packed so it won't move around.
- Loose pieces inside a box can cause accidents if the box becomes unbalanced.

IS THE LOAD EASY TO GRIP?

- Be sure you have a tight grip on the object before you lift it.
- Handles applied to the object may help you lift it safely.



IS THE LOAD EASY TO REACH?

- To avoid hurting your back, use a ladder when you're lifting something over your head.
- Get as close as you can to the load. Slide the load towards you if you can.
- Don't arch your back--avoid reaching out for an object.
- Do the work with your legs and your arms--not your back.

HOW TO AVOID A BACK INJURY

- **Plan ahead before lifting.**
Knowing what you're doing and where you're going will prevent you from making awkward movements while holding something heavy. Clear a path, and if lifting something with another person, make sure both of you agree on the plan.
- **Lift close to your body.**
You will be a stronger and more stable lifter if the object is held close to your body rather than at the end of your reach. Make sure you have a firm hold on the object you are lifting, and keep it balanced close to your body. Keep the load close to your body. Having to reach out to lift and carry an object may hurt your back.
- **Feet shoulder width apart.**

A solid base of support is important while lifting. Holding your feet too close together will be unstable, too far apart will hinder movement. Keep the feet about shoulder width apart and take short steps.

- **Bend your knees and keep your back straight.**
Practice the lifting motion before you lift the object, and think about your motion before you lift. Focus on keeping your spine straight--raise and lower to the ground by bending your knees.
- **Tighten your stomach muscles.**
Tightening your abdominal muscles will hold your back in a good lifting position and will help prevent excessive force on the spine.
- **Lift with your legs.**
Your legs are many times stronger than your back muscles--let your strength work in your favor. Again, lower to the ground by bending your knees, not your back. Keeping your eyes focused upwards helps to keep your back straight.
- **If you're straining, get help.**
If an object is too heavy, or awkward in shape, make sure you have someone around who can help you lift.
- **Wear a belt or back support.**
If you are lifting in your job or often at home a back belt can help you maintain a better lifting posture. A back belt or support will not prevent you from straining or hurting your back.

CONCLUSION:

- **Never bend your back to pick something up.**
It's just not worth the damage that improper lifting technique can cause.
- **Hold the object close to your body.**
You are a much more stable lifter if you're not reaching for an object.
- **Don't twist or bend.**
Face in the direction you are walking. If you need to turn, stop, turn in small steps, and then continue walking.
- **Keep your eyes up.**
Looking slightly upwards will help you maintain a better position of the spine.