

Preventing Back Injuries

Back strains are the most frequent on-the-job injury occurring in the workplace. However, most back injuries are preventable. Follow these simple lifting techniques to help prevent back injuries.

1. Keep your back straight.
2. Keep the load close to your body.
3. Think about the lift. What will make the lift safe? The greatest cause of back injuries is habit. Most workers lift incorrectly because they do not consciously think about lifting.
4. Test the weight of the object to be lifted. Can it be handled safely?
5. Don't twist when lifting.
6. Use your legs to lift. Bend your knees, not your waist.
7. Watch others use safe lifting practices and consciously break bad lifting habits.
8. Use mechanical or ergonomic devices if lifts are frequent. Devices that minimize the number of lifts, the lifting distance and the lifting load weight include conveyors, hoists, fork-lifts, adjustable pallet lifts and lift assists.

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