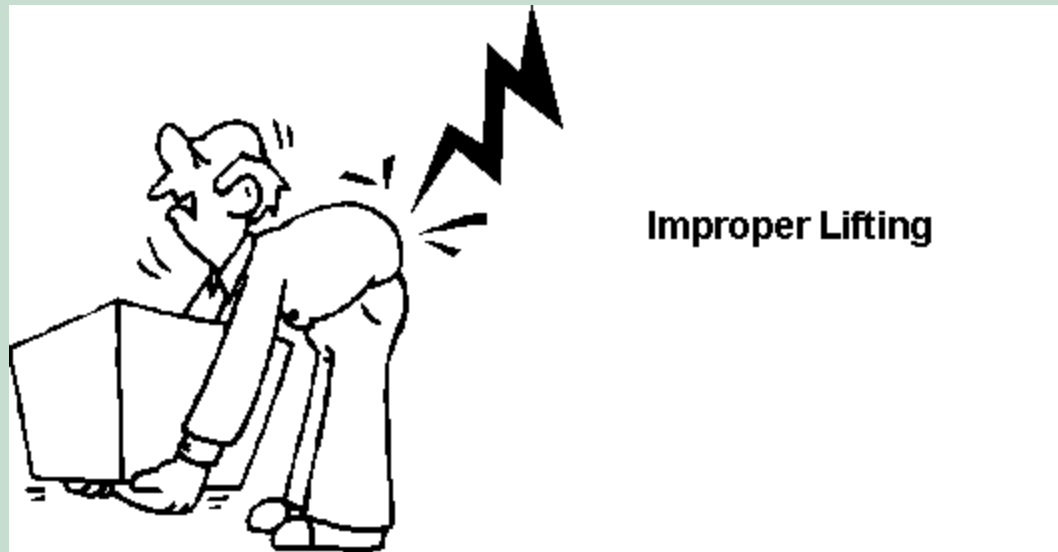


# Lifting Safety





**The wrong way!**



**The right way!**

# Back Injury Statistics

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- 80% of Americans will have a back injury that requires medical attention.
- Back injuries are the second most common cause of lost work time, next to the common cold.
- Over 1,000,000 back injuries annually.
- Injured backs are often subject to re-injury.
- In addition to missed work, there may be a lifetime of pain.

# Leading Back Injury Tasks

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Anytime you find yourself doing one of the following, you could injure your back:

- *Heavy lifting* - especially repetitive *lifting* over a long period of time.
- *Twisting at the waist while lifting* - using a shovel or moving objects from one location to another while the feet remain in one position for example.
- *Reaching and lifting* - over your head, *across* a desk or from the back of a truck.
- *Lifting or carrying objects that have an odd shape or are awkward* - carrying a computer.
- *Working with poor body posture or in uncomfortable positions* - tasks that require you to bend over for long periods of time – kneeling, trash pick-up, sorting, packing.

# Leading Back Injury Tasks

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Anytime you find yourself doing one of the following, you could injure your back:

- *Standing or sitting too long in one position* - Sitting can be very hard on the lower back.
- *Slips and falls* - It is possible to suffer serious back injury from slipping on wet floors or ice or the result of a trip and fall.

# Controls to Prevent Back Injuries

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## ➤ Engineering Controls

- Are used to redesign the lifting process and/or workstation to minimize lifting hazards.
- Use equipment to lighten the load or remove lifting process all together.

# Controls to Prevent Back Injuries

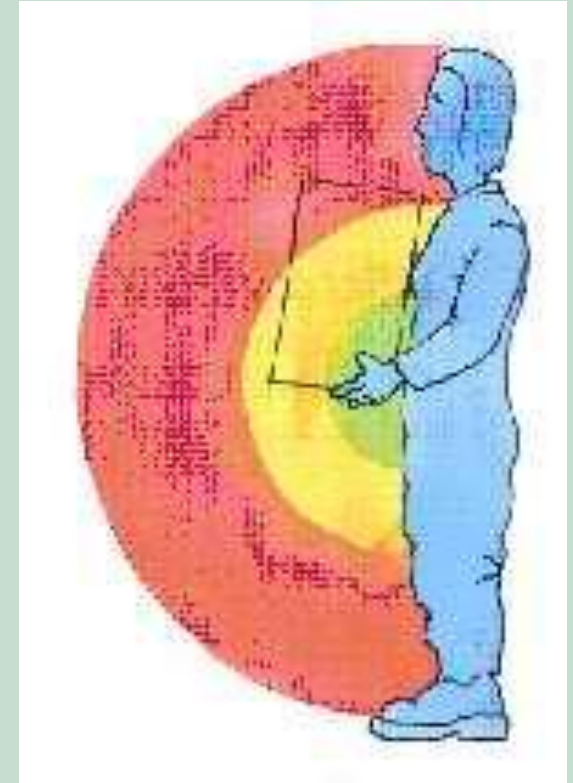
## ↘ Administrative controls:

- Training employees to utilize lifting techniques that place minimum stress on the lower back.
- Implementing stretching programs to reduce the risk of muscle strain.



# Safe Lifting Zone

- The safe lifting zone..
  - Is between your knees and your shoulders.
- Below knee level?
  - Bend with your knees and lift with your legs.
- Above your shoulders..
  - Use a stool or ladder.





# How to Lift Safely

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- Before lifting, take a moment to think about what you're about to do.
  - Remember, small objects do not necessarily mean a light load.
- Examine the object for sharp corners, slippery spots or other potential hazards.
- Know your limit and don't try to exceed it.
- Ask for help if needed, or if possible, divide the load to make it lighter.
- Know where you are going to set the item down.
- Make sure the location and your path of travel are free of obstruction.
- Stretch is necessary.
- Then follow these steps...

# Step 1 – Lift Safely

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- Stand close to the load.
- With your feet spread apart about shoulder width.
- With one foot slightly in-front of the other for balance.



# Step 2 – Lift Safely

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- Squat down bending at your knees (not your waist).
- Tuck your chin while keeping your back as vertical as possible.

# Step 3 – Lift Safely

- Get a firm grasp of the object before beginning to lift.
- It is OK to put one foot behind the object and the other next to it.



# Step 4 – Lift Safely

- Begin lifting slowly with your legs by straightening them.
- Never twist your body during this step.
- Do not twist knees, elbows, shoulders, ankles, etc.



# Step 5 – Safe Lifting



- Once the lift is complete, keep the object as close to the body as possible.
- As the loads center of gravity moves away from the body, there is a dramatic increase of stress to the lumbar region of the back.

# Step 6 – Safe Lifting



- If you must turn while carrying the load, turn at your feet - not your torso.
- To place the object below your waist, follow the same procedure in reverse order.
- Remember – keep your back as vertical as possible and bend at the knees.

# Alternates to Lifting

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- Hand trucks and Pushcarts - When using a hand truck or pushcart, remember:
  - It is easier and safer to push than to pull.
  - Stay close to the load, try not to lean over, and keep your back straight or slightly arched.
  - Use both hands to control the hand truck or pushcart.
  - Use tie-down straps, if necessary, to secure the load.
  - Avoid stairs and inclines. If you must take a load to another floor, use a freight elevator.
- What are some other alternatives to lifting?



# Mechanical Aides

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- Often the best way to move loads is with a mechanical aid, like a hand truck or rolling cart.
- Choose the right aid for the job and inspect it before use.
- Place the heaviest items on the bottom, with the weight concentrated between the wheels.
- Keep your hands away from the edges so they won't be scraped or crushed in doorways.

# Ways to Ensure a Healthy Back

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- *Stretch first* ... Take the time to stretch your muscles before starting if you know that you're going to be doing anything that may be hard on your back.
- *Slow down* ... Take it slow if you are doing a lot of heavy, repetitive lifting. Allow recovery time between lifts. **"Don't overdo it"**
- *Rest your back* ... Take "micro" (short) breaks frequently. Stretch after each lift. When you know that you will be working in an awkward position for a long time, plan on taking one minute stretch break every so often to avoid stiffness and soreness.

# Ways to Ensure a Healthy Back

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- *Get in shape* - Strengthen your stomach muscles, lose weight if you are overweight and increase your flexibility. All of these things can help reduce the probability of a back injury.
- *Maintain correct posture* - maintain the back natural curves by standing straight and sitting properly.