

Back Safety

Lifting is usually a part of our daily job routine. We need to be cautious of injuries that may occur from not lifting properly or attempting to lift more than we should. Our back is an important part of health and injuries can linger for months and even years. It is not uncommon for small back injuries to develop into chronic back pain. Injuries include back strains, sprains, bulging disk, and a herniated disk.

Causes of Back Injuries:

Most back injuries can be traced back to a few simple causes.

Poor Posture: Poor posture can be anything from an awkward sleeping position to poor slouching habits.

Unconditioned Back: When your back is not being maintained and properly conditioned, it can lead to injuries.

Excessive Weight: Just as excessive weight can lead to general health issues; it can also lead to back pain, by putting additional stress on your back.

Bad Lifting Techniques: Lifting a load improperly is one of the most common causes of back injuries.

How to Lift Safely:

It is important to know the steps to lifting properly in order to prevent any future injuries.

Lifting Plan: Size up the load, clear the path, clear the unloading zone

Lifting Properly: Stand close with a wide stance, bend knees, pull load close and grip it, tighten stomach while lifting your head, rise using your legs not your back

Carrying the Load: Make sure you can see, take small stable steps, do not twist your back

Unloading Properly: Squat with the load, do not bend your back over the load, be careful of your fingers

Do's of Lifting

- Stand close to the load with a wide stance
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Use material handling equipment whenever possible
- Make sure weight is not too heavy and evenly distributed
- Think before you lift, keep your back in mind
- Inspect your path
- Ensure unloading zone is cleared

Don'ts of Lifting

- Avoid heavy lifting, especially if you have a previous injury
- Never bend at your back, bend with your knees
- Never lift more than you can handle
- Never try to recover a falling load
- Never lift with a rounded back
- Never reach over your shoulders to lift
- Never twist your body when lifting