

Back Safety

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one million workers suffer back injuries each year. In the US, back injuries account for nearly 20% of all injuries and illnesses in the workplace. The risk of injury is influenced by age, fitness level, and weight.

Knowing Your Back:

- Your spine consists of 24 interlocking bones with flexible joints called vertebrae.
- Shock absorbing discs lie in between each pair of vertebrae.
- A healthy spine is arranged in three natural curves that form an S-shape.
- These natural curves keep your body balanced and support you when you move.
- The curves also distribute your weight evenly throughout your spine, making back injuries less likely.

Common Back Injury Causes

- Trying to lift too much weight
- Twisting & bending while lifting
- Reaching & lifting
- Carrying awkward objects
- Working in awkward positions
- Sitting or standing too long

Injury Prevention: Safe Lifting Techniques

- Plant Your Feet Firmly- Get a Stable Base
- Bend at Your Knees- Not Your Waist
- Tighten Your Abdominal Muscles to Support Your Spine
- Get a Good Grip- Use Both Hands
- Keep the Load Close to Your Body
- Use Your Leg Muscles As You Lift
- Keep Your Back Upright, Keep It in Its Natural Posture
- Lift Steadily and Smoothly Without Jerking
- To put the item down, use the above directions in reverse.

Lifting Techniques	
Proper	Improper
<p>Single Knee Method</p> 	<p>Bending at waist or lifting with your back.</p> 
<p>Squat method</p> 	

Additional Injury Prevention Techniques/Tips

- Move the item by mechanical means, like with a cart or hand truck
 - If using a cart, be sure to PUSH. Pulling can lead to awkward posture and injuries.
- Use the buddy system to do a team lift to distribute the weight burden
- Stretch before and after moving an item.
- Stay Fit