

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
Single Knee Method 	Bending at waist or lifting with your back. 
Squat method 	

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