



SAFETY FIRST

Safe Body Mechanics - Using proper body mechanics while lifting is a sure way you can prevent a back injury during your daily activities. Here are some *Safe Body Mechanics Basics* to keep you safe while lifting:

1. **Test the load.** Before you lift, check the weight and make sure you can lift it safely. If not, get help or use an assistive device.
2. **Keep your back in its natural curve.** Bend at the hips and/or knees. With the lower back erect, the forces are distributed safely.
3. **Maintain a wide base of support.** A solid and wide base will help reduce the possibility of slipping.
4. **Hold objects as close to you as possible.** This reduces stress on the back.
5. **Do not twist when carrying.** Move or change directions with the feet. This decreases the stress and load on the back.
6. **Think before you lift.** First think how you will lift the object. Plan the path and make sure it is clear.
7. **Lift with your legs and knees.** Using your legs and knees will help diminish the forces on the low back.
8. **Move obstacles out of the way.** Making sure the path is clear (clearing away toys, tools, loose rugs, etc.) decreases the risk of slipping, tripping, or falling.
9. **Pull rather than push.** It is easier to utilize your weight advantage when pulling.
10. **Eliminate repetitive lifting duties if possible.** Place objects or supplies that you constantly need or use at a height that will decrease lifting activities.