

Prevent Back Injuries

Back pain can be painful and make it difficult to do your job. One of the most important ways you can prevent back injuries is to lift correctly. The proper technique involves these steps:

- Stand close to the object with a wide stance. Feet should be shoulder-width apart, with toes pointing outward.
- Bend at the knees and hips, and try to maintain the body's natural curve.
- Pull the load close and grip it firmly.
- Tighten stomach muscles to act as a back support, and lift the head, which will help lift with the legs rather than the back.
- When ready to lift, use the legs and keep the back straight.

Good Posture, Safe Backs

Another good way to prevent injury is to maintain proper posture while sitting or standing. Here are some key points:

- Try to maintain the body's natural curves when sitting, standing, or moving about.
- When standing, stand straight with shoulders back, head up, and feet shoulder-width apart. Don't slouch or hang the head.
- When standing for long periods, put a foot up on a rail, ledge, or stool in order to help the body maintain its natural curve.
- When sitting, don't slouch backward, forward, or to the side. Sit up straight against the chair's backrest, with shoulders back and head up. A footrest may help maintain proper position.
- When keyboarding for a long periods, make sure the keyboard and chair are positioned to allow the shoulders to stay back and the forearms to stay parallel to the floor.
- Stretch and change position as often as possible.

Exercise for Healthy Backs

Exercising is important, too. These simple, quick exercises can help prevent back injuries. (You should always consult with you doctor before starting an exercise program.):

- Walking for 30 minutes a day will help strengthen muscles and prevent weight gain.
- Daily stretching exercises will help improve flexibility and keep the back in good condition. Stretching exercises might include bending backwards or sideways, rotating hips, or twisting gently from side to side.
- Sit-ups help strengthen stomach muscles, which in turn help support the back.
- Leg lifts help strengthen the muscles in hips and buttocks. This exercise can be done when standing or when lying on the floor.
- Squats strengthen the back, stomach, and leg muscles, and also help with safe lifting.

When we share the responsibility for safety in the workplace, everyone wins!!