Risk Management and Safety
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The Force is Against You
The Forces Involved

The amount of force you place on your back in lifting may surprise you!

Think of your back as a lever.

With the fulcrum in the center, it only takes ten pounds of pressure to lift a ten pound object.
The Forces Involved

If you shift the fulcrum to one side, it takes much more force to lift the same object. Your waist acts like the fulcrum in a lever system, on a 10:1 ratio.

Lifting a ten pound object puts 100 pounds of pressure on your lower back.
The Forces Involved

When you add in the 105 pounds of the average human upper torso,

You see that lifting a ten pound object actually puts 1,150 pounds of pressure on the lower back!
If you were 25 pounds overweight, it would add an additional 250 pounds of pressure on your back every time you bend over.
Back injuries are second in number after injuries to the fingers and hands.
Common Causes of Back Injuries

- Heavy Lifting or Lowering
- Twisting
- Pushing and Pulling
- Reaching & Lifting
- Carrying & Lifting
- Awkward Postures
- Sitting or Standing
- Slips, Trips & Falls
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Three main factors in manual lifting:

- Load Location - Where is the load?
- Task Repetition - Frequency of Exertion
- Load Weight - How heavy?
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Anytime you find yourself doing one of these things, you should think:

DANGER! My back is at risk!

Try to avoid heavy lifting . . . Especially repetitive lifting over a long period of time.
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Twisting at the waist while lifting or holding a heavy load . . . This frequently happens when using a shovel.
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Reaching and lifting . . . over your head, across a table, or out the back of a truck . . .
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Lifting or carrying objects with awkward or odd shapes...
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Working in awkward, uncomfortable positions . . .
Common Causes of Back Injuries

Sitting or standing too long in one position... Sitting can be very hard on the lower back...
Common Causes of Back Injuries

It is also possible to injure your back slipping on a wet floor or ice . . .
Prevention
Prevent Back Injuries

Avoid lifting and bending whenever you can.

Place objects up off the floor.

Raise/lower shelves.

Use carts and dollies.
Prevent Back Injuries

Use cranes, hoists, lift tables, and other lift-assist devices whenever you can.

Test the weight of an object before lifting by picking up a corner.

Get help if it’s too heavy for you to lift it alone.
Prevent Back Injuries

Use proper lift procedures

Follow these steps when lifting . . .

• Take a balanced stance, feet shoulder-width apart.
• Squat down to lift, get as close as you can.
Prevent Back Injuries

Get a secure grip, hug the load.

Lift gradually using your legs, keep load close to you, keep back and neck straight.
Prevent Back Injuries

Do not turn at the waist to change direction or to put an object down.

Change directions by pointing your feet and turning your whole body. Avoid twisting at your waist.

To put load down, use these guidelines in reverse.
Use gloves to protect the hands and safety shoes to protect the feet.

Inspect objects for slivers, sharp edges, rough surfaces, or slippery surfaces before attempting to lift.
Points to Remember

Keep fingers away from pinch and shear points.

Do not carry a load that obstructs the view of the direction of travel.

Make sure the path is clear. Look for obstructions and spills.
Points to Remember

Do not “jerk-lift” loads, which multiplies stress to the lower back.

Consider the need to rest.
Points to Remember

Use Team-Lifting Principles when the load or material is too much for one person to handle safely and mechanical equipment practical for this purpose.

- Individuals approximately the same size
- Lift and move together
- Observer to give orders to ensure necessary coordination
Principals of Safe Handling
Principles of Safe Handling
Principals of Safe Handling

Assess the task:
- Posture
- Pacing, rate of work, breaks
- Requirements for team handling

Assess Your Own Capabilities:
- Strength, height, etc.
- Health problems
- Gender, age, fitness
Assess the Load:
- Weight, shape, size
- Handles, packaging
- Stability
- Contents: hot, cold, hazardous

Assess the environment:
- Space constraints
- Flooring condition, levels
- Temperature, humidity, ventilation
- Tidiness, general housekeeping
Principals of Safe Handling

**Plan**

**Task**
- What is the most appropriate posture?
- Is there mechanical aid available?
- Is there anyone else to help?

**Route** - Consider start and end points
- Can any obstructions be cleared
Principals of Safe Handling

Prepare the load:

- Can the load be split?
- Can the load be made more stable?
- Make sure contents are evenly distributed?
- Move the load’s center of gravity close to yours
- Cover sharp / abrasive edges
Principals of Safe Handling

Prepare yourself and the area:
- Check space constraints
- Move obstacles
- Check final destination
- Check housekeeping
- Get a good grip on the load
- Use PPE where appropriate
Principals of Safe Handling

Perform

Apply principles of biomechanics to reduce the load on the spine

- Keep a wide base of support.
- Maintain the lumbar curve (low back) as much as possible.
- Get a good grip.
- Position feet in direction of travel.
- Use smooth controlled movements.
- Use friction to minimize force.
- Try to avoid twisting and stooping.
- Use team lifting where appropriate.
Things You Can Do

Minimize problems with your back by exercises that tone the muscles in your back, hips and thighs.

Before beginning any exercise program, you should check with your doctor.
Exercise regularly, every other day.

Warm up slowly . . . A brisk walk is a good way to warm up.

Inhale deeply before each repetition of an exercise and exhale when performing each repetition.
Exercises To Help Your Back

Wall slides to strengthen your muscles . . .

Stand with your back against a wall, feet shoulder-width apart.

Slide down into a crouch with knees bent to 90 degrees.

Count to 5 and slide back up the wall.

Repeat 5 times
Leg raises to strengthen back and hip muscles . . .

Lie on your stomach.

Tighten muscles in one leg and raise leg from floor.

Hold for count of 10, and return leg to floor.

Do the same with your other leg.

Repeat five times with each leg.
Leg raises to strengthen back and hip muscles.

Lie on back, arms at your sides. Lift one leg off floor and hold for count of ten.

Do the same with the other leg. If this is too difficult... Keep one knee bent and the foot flat on the floor while raising the other leg.

Repeat five times with each leg.
Exercises To Help Your Back

Leg raises while seated . . .
Sit upright, legs straight and extended at an angle to floor. Lift one leg waist high. Slowly return to floor. Do the same with the other leg.

Repeat 5 times with each leg.
Partial sit-up to strengthen stomach muscles . . . Lie on back, knees bent and feet flat on floor… Slowly raise head and shoulders off floor and reach both hands toward your knees. Count to 10.

Repeat 5 times
Exercises To Help Your Back

Back leg swing to strengthen hip and back muscles...

Stand behind chair, hands on chair. Lift one leg back and up, keeping the knee straight. Return slowly. Raise other leg and return.

Repeat 5 time with each leg.
Exercises To Decrease the Strain on Your Back

Lie on back, knees bent, feet flat on floor.
Raise knees toward chest.
Place hands under knees & pull knees to chest.

Do not raise head.

Do not straighten legs as you lower them.

Start with 5 repetitions, several time a day.
Exercises To Decrease the Strain on Your Back

Lie on stomach, hands under shoulders, elbows bent and push up. Raise top half of body as high as possible. Keep hips and legs on floor. Hold for one or two seconds.

Repeat 10 times, several times a day.
Exercises To Decrease the Strain on Your Back

Stand with feet apart.
Place hands in small of back. Keep knees straight.
Bend backwards at waist as far as possible and hold for one or two seconds.

Repeat as needed.
Take care of your back...

And it will take care of you

- Exercise daily
- Avoid Heavy Lifting
- Get Help with heavy or bulky objects
- If you must bend over, do it properly
- Avoid twisting at the waist when carrying objects
- Always watch where you’re going
Rules of Lifting - Overview:

DO engineer manual lifting and lowering out of the workplace. If this is not an option, perform it between knuckle and shoulder height.

DO be in good physical shape. If you are not used to lifting and vigorous exercise, don’t attempt to do difficult lifting or lowering tasks.
Rules of Lifting - Overview:

DO think before acting. Place material conveniently within reach. Have handling aids available. Make sure sufficient space is cleared.

Do get a good grip on the load. Test the weight before trying to move it. If it is too bulky or heavy, get a mechanical lifting aid or somebody else to help, or both.
Rules of Lifting - Overview:

DO get the load close to the body. Place the feet close to the load. Stand in a stable position with the feet pointing in the direction of movement. Lift mostly by straightening the legs.

DO NOT twist the back or bend sideways!
Rules of Lifting - Overview:

DO NOT lift or lower awkwardly.

DO NOT hesitate to get mechanical help or help from another person.

DO NOT lift with arms extended.

DO NOT continue lifting when the load is too heavy!
Back Safety & Lifting

Any Questions, Comments!!!