

Back Injury Prevention

The best way to prevent back injuries is to develop habits that reduce the strain placed on the back. There are some basic things you can do to help.

Avoid Lifting and Bending Whenever You Can

Place objects up off the floor. If you can set something down on a table or other elevated surface instead of on the floor, do it so that you won't have to reach down to pick it up again.

Raise/lower shelves. The best zone for lifting is between your shoulders and your waist. Put heavier objects on shelves at waist level, lighter objects on lower or higher shelves.

Use carts and dolly's to move objects, instead of carrying them yourself. (Remember that it is better on your back to push carts than to pull them.)

Use Proper Lifting Procedures

BEND YOUR KNEES



HUG THE LOAD



AVOID TWISTING



Follow these steps when lifting:

1. Take a balanced stance with your feet about shoulder-width apart. One foot can be behind the object and the other next to it.
2. Squat down to lift the object, but keep your heels off of the floor. Get as close to the object as you can.
3. Use your palms to get a secure grip on the load. Make sure you'll be able to maintain a hold on the object without switching your grip later.
4. Lift gradually using your leg, abdominal, and buttock muscles and keeping the load as close to you as possible. Keep your chin tucked in so as to keep a relatively straight back and neckline.
5. Once you're standing, change directions by pointing your feet in the direction you want to go and turning your whole body. Avoid twisting at your waist while carrying a load.
6. When you put a load down, use these same guidelines in reverse.

