

April 27th TBT Safe Lifting Practices

2024-04-27 TBT Safe Lifting Practices

In the construction industry 25% of injuries are back injuries. More than half of the back-related injuries are caused by over-exertion and bodily reaction from lifting, lowering, carrying, pushing, and pulling materials. These practices also are beneficial in the office as well as at home! **Protect yourself by following safe lifting techniques.**

Before lifting:

- Assess the object you are lifting. Get help if needed – do not attempt to lift the load if it is too heavy or awkward.
- Make sure the weight of the load is balanced and will not shift around during transportation.
- Ensure that floors are dry and clear of any hazards.
- Avoid walking on wet, slippery, or uneven surfaces.

When Lifting, Carrying or Lowering:

- Stand close to the object and put yourself in the best position for the lift – avoid reaching, bending or twisting.
- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, with one foot slightly ahead of the other.
- Squat down and bend at the knees, close to the object.
- Grip the object with both hands.
- Tighten your stomach muscles as you begin to lift to provide back support.
- Lift with your legs, not with your back.
- Lift as smoothly as possible – don't jerk the load.
- While carrying, do not twist or bend at the waist.
- To change direction, shift your foot position and turn your whole body.
- Keep the object as close to your body as possible.
- Bend at your knees to put the object down.

The safest way to lift an object is to tuck your pelvis, bend your knees slightly, hug the load close to you and lift straight up without twisting. When you have overhead loads, get a ladder to be able to reach it better and don't over-extend upwards. Test the load's weight first before trying to grab and go. Don't be afraid to ask a coworker to assist you.

Using proper lifting techniques can help prevent downtime due to avoidable back injuries. With a little practice, precautionary methods such as these can become good daily habits that could help prevent back injuries on and off the job.

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