

SAFE LIFTING TECHNIQUES

Safe Lifting Techniques TBT 12-11-23

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Manually lifting heavy objects improperly can lead to a range of injuries, including strains, sprains, and even more severe musculoskeletal issues. By utilizing proper lifting techniques, we can significantly reduce the risk of these injuries and promote a safer workplace.

Assess the Load: Prior to lifting anything, take a moment to assess the weight, size & shape of the object. Gently lift one corner, if possible. If the load seems too heavy, large or awkward to lift safely, get assistance from someone or mechanical aid such as a dolly or forklift.

Inspect Work Area: Take note and eliminate, if necessary, any potential slip, trip and fall hazards. Become familiar with any blind spots and traffic that may enter the area.

Warm-Up: Stretching is essential to prevent injuries. Perform light stretching exercises before you start lifting to prepare your muscles for the task ahead.

Proper Body Mechanics: Maintain a stable base by keeping your feet shoulder-width apart and facing the load. Bend at the hips and knees, not at the waist. Keep your back straight and chin high and avoid twisting while lifting. Engage your core muscles for best results.

Get a Good Grip: Lifting without a good grip can lead to drops and injuries. Ensure you have a secure grip on the object. Use both hands and if necessary, wear gloves to increase grip.

Keep the Load Close: Position the load close to your body to reduce the strain on your back. Avoid lifts that require extending your arms fully, as this can put additional stress on your back and shoulder muscles.

Let Your Legs Do the Heavy Work: The power for lifting should come from your legs, not your back. Push through your heels, straighten your hips and knees, and then lift in a smooth, controlled motion. Do not jerk or make sudden movements while lifting.

Pivot, Don't Twist: When changing direction while handling a load, pivot your feet instead of twisting your torso.

Never Lift When Injured: If you have a previous back injury, do not attempt to make a heavy lift.

Take Away:

If you feel that you've just injured yourself while lifting. Stop what you're doing immediately and report it to your Supervisor and Safety Department.

The risk of injury while lifting objects increases significantly when done so in slippery conditions. With winter upon us, be on high alert for snow & ice. Stay safe and prioritize your well-being.