

SAFETY TALK

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MSD / Back Care

Back injuries and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are among the most common workplace injuries. They can occur suddenly from a single lift or develop gradually over time due to repetitive movements, awkward postures, or overexertion.

Back injuries can affect muscles, joints, ligaments, tendons, nerves, and the spine. Even minor strains repeated over time can lead to long-term pain and reduced mobility.

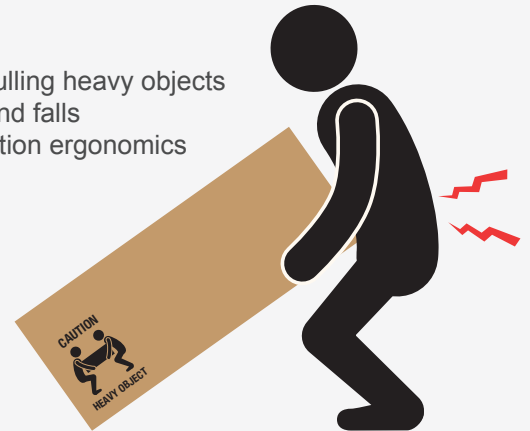
COMMON CAUSES OF BACK INJURIES

- Lifting heavy or awkward loads
- Twisting while lifting or carrying
- Repetitive movements
- Poor posture or prolonged awkward positions
- Overreaching
- Pushing or pulling heavy objects
- Slips, trips, and falls
- Poor workstation ergonomics

WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Do not ignore early signs of strain or injury. Report symptoms early before they become more serious:

- Back pain or stiffness
- Muscle tightness or spasms
- Tingling or numbness
- Reduced range of motion
- Pain that worsens with movement
- Fatigue or discomfort during tasks



SAFE LIFTING TIPS

PLAN BEFORE YOU LIFT

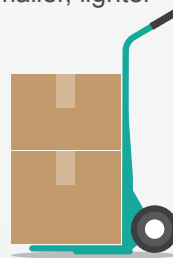
Before lifting or moving any object:

- Assess the load before lifting
- Test the weight and stability
- Check for sharp edges, shifting contents, or awkward shapes
- Plan your route and clear obstacles
- Ensure you have good footing
- Decide whether help or mechanical assistance is needed



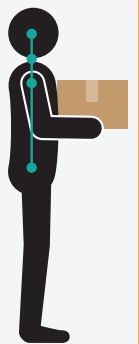
Whenever possible:

- Use carts, dollies, lift tables, or other mechanical aids
- Break loads into smaller, lighter loads
- Ask for assistance with heavy or awkward items



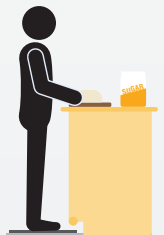
When carrying:

- Keep the load balanced
- Maintain clear visibility
- Watch for uneven surfaces or obstacles
- Move carefully and avoid sudden movements



ERGONOMIC BEST PRACTICES

- Adjust workstations to reduce awkward postures
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach
- Alternate tasks when possible
- Take stretching or movement breaks
- Maintain good posture throughout the day
- Report ergonomic concerns or equipment issues promptly



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Back injuries can happen suddenly or develop gradually over time. Using proper body mechanics, recognizing early warning signs, and addressing hazards promptly can help protect your health and prevent long-term injury.