Proper Lifting Techniques
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Proper Lifting Techniques – Why?

Why are proper lifting techniques important?

- Poor techniques can lead to back, leg, and arm pain.

Lifting and Your Back
Preventing Back Injury

SAFETY FIRST
USE PROPER LIFTING TECHNIQUES

ACUITY
Proper Lifting Techniques – Why?

- About 80% of adults experience a back injury in their lifetime
  - About 10% will suffer a reinjury

- Back injuries are the 2nd most common reason for missed work, after the common cold
Proper Lifting Techniques – Why?

- Think of your back as a lever.
- With the balance of the lever in the center, it only takes 10 pounds of pressure to lift a 10-pound object.
Proper Lifting Techniques – Why?

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

Lifting a 10-pound object puts 100 pounds of pressure on your lower back.
Proper Lifting Techniques – Why?

- When you add in the 105 pounds of the average human upper torso, you see that lifting a 10-pound object actually puts 1,150 pounds of pressure on the lower back.
Proper Lifting Techniques – Why?

- If you were 25 pounds overweight, it would add an additional 250 pounds of pressure on your back every time you bend over.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Eliminate the exposure.
  - Prior to any lift, attempt to eliminate the exposure by using mechanical aids.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Plan ahead before lifting.
  - Planning will prevent you from making awkward movements while holding something heavy.
  - Clear a path, and if lifting something with another person, make sure both of you agree on the plan.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Position feet shoulder-width apart.
  - A solid base of support is important while lifting.
  - Holding your feet too close together will be unstable, too far apart will hinder movement.
  - Keep the feet about shoulder-width apart and take short steps.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
  - Practice the lifting motion before you lift the object, and think about your motion before you lift.
  - Focus on keeping your spine straight, rise from and lower to the ground by bending your knees.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Lift with your legs.
  - Your legs are many times stronger than your back muscles. Let your strength work in your favor.
  - Lower to the ground by bending your knees, not your back.
  - Keep your eyes focused upwards which helps keep your back straight.
Lift close to your body.

- Lifting close to your body rather than at the end of your reach provides strength and stability.
- Make sure you have a firm hold on the object and keep it balanced.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Tighten your stomach muscles.
  - Tightening your abdominal muscles will hold your back in a good lifting position.
  - A tight abdomen helps prevent excessive force on the spine.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- If you'restraining, get help.
  - Assess the weight and shape of an object before attempting to lift it and have someone to help if needed.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Don’t twist.
  - When placing a load to one side or the other, move your feet instead of twisting.
Proper Lifting Techniques – The Basics

- Remember to use the same techniques when setting the load down.
  - Don’t let a good lift turn bad because of an improper set down!
How Do We Make Lifting Easier?

- Looks like backbreaking work!
How Do We Make Lifting Easier?

- With lift tables, all lifting is done at waist level - no more bending over.
How Do We Make Lifting Easier?

- Avoid lifting above your head.
How Do We Make Lifting Easier?

- Use carts, dollies, or forklifts.
Proper Lifting Techniques – Tips

- Never bend your back to pick something up.
- Hold the object close to your body.
- Don't twist or bend.
- Test the weight.
- Keep your eyes up.
Proper Lifting Techniques – Tips

- Don’t forget to use safe lifting techniques at home as well!
Conclusion

- For further assistance
  - Call your Agent
  - Contact ACUITY Loss Control at 800.242.7666
  - Send an email to ACUITYEducation@acuity.com

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