



## **BACK SAFETY**

Many jobs require employees to manually handle a variety of objects daily, and often we need to use our back muscles to complete the task. Our backs are extremely important and it's vital to understand best practices when it comes to preventing back injuries.

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### **COMMON BACK INJURIES**

- Strain (overstretching your back)
  - Sprain (ligament is torn or badly stretched)
  - Bulging Disk
  - Herniated Disc
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### **COMMON CAUSES OF BACK INJURIES**

- Reaching
  - Lifting
  - Carrying
  - Pulling
  - Pushing
  - Repetitive Motion
  - Twisting
  - Slips/Trips
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### **FACTS**

- Back injuries are the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common cause of days away from work, next to the common cold.
  - 20% of all workplace injuries and illnesses each year are related to back injuries.
  - Once your back is injured, it is more likely to be reinjured so you should seek proper treatment immediately.
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### **BACK INJURY PREVENTION**

- Practice proper posture, don't slouch.
- Move throughout the day if you're required to sit at a desk.
- Cut down on carrying by using carts, dollies, forklifts etc.
- Store heavier materials at waist height.
- Ensure walkways are clear and dry.
- Warm up your muscles/stretch.
- Stand close to the load, facing the way you intend to move it.
- Use a wide stance for balance.
- Bend at your knees not at your waist.
- Do not lift if you are not convinced that you can handle the load safely.
- Ensure a good grip on the load you're moving.
- Keep arms straight and tighten abs.
- Carry and lift the load close to your body.
- Lift smoothly without jerking. Power should be coming from your legs.
- Avoid twisting and side bending while lifting.

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