

Location: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

TOPIC C025: BACK INJURY PREVENTION

Introduction to Hazards: Proper lifting techniques are crucial to preventing back injuries. Every year thousands of employees needlessly injure themselves due to improper back injury prevention. Back injury is one of the most common injuries in the workplace. Proper lifting techniques will ensure these nagging injuries never occur.

Mitigating Back Problems:

Although back problems are one of the most common types of pain and disability, most back injuries are completely preventable by using proper lifting techniques and maintaining good physical condition. A well-toned body can take unexpected stress or strain better than one suffering from lack of exercise.

Additionally:

- Stretching your legs and back is imperative prior to lifting any objects
- If you're sitting for extended periods, get up and stretch periodically
- If your back is sore, ice the sore area; applying heat to a recent injury increases swelling
- Practice proper posture; poor posture weakens the back
- Exercise your abdominal muscles; a strong stomach reduces the chance of back injury
- If working in a stationary, standing position for lengthy periods, use floor pads, rugs, or carpet to help prevent back fatigue
- If working at a desk or bench for extended periods, ensure that the chair and desk, or bench, are adjusted for your height
- Walking for extended periods can help to keep back muscles loose and posture straight
- A regular exercise routine will help your back stay strong and injury free
- Report any injuries to the supervisor immediately

Proper Lifting Techniques:

- Have a supervisor or a competent worker demonstrate the proper method of bending and lifting
- Size up the load before you lift. Test the weight by lifting one of the corners or pushing the load. If it is heavy or feels too clumsy, get help from another worker. When in doubt, do not lift alone!
- Ensure your grip is secure and your lifting motion is unobstructed
- Bend your knees, keeping your back as straight as possible when raising or lowering the object
- Lift smoothly and straight up. Let your legs do the work, not your back!
- Keep your feet at shoulder width close to the object, and center your body over the object when lifting
- Don't twist your body when lifting an object. Turn your whole body by changing foot position
- Don't lift heavy objects above or away from your body
- Stop lifting immediately if sharp pains develop during, before, or after the lift
- Use back supports or braces whenever doing repetitive heavy lifts. Always inspect your belts for defects and proper fit. Remember that a back brace does not make you stronger
- Don't use a co-worker's back support or braces. They are fitted to a specific worker for their own safety
- Don't exceed your lifting capabilities. If you have problems lifting an object, ask for help or use a lifting device
- Always push a load on a cart or dolly, don't pull it
- Split the load into several smaller ones when you can. If it is a long or awkward load, get some help
- Use mechanical lifting devices whenever possible

Employee Attendance:(Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

These guidelines do not supersede local, state or federal regulations, and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.