



Instructor Guide

Handling and Lifting

Topic Overview (why the topic is important to the students)

Improper handling and lifting of heavy or bulky objects are major sources of back injuries. These injuries can affect your quality of life for weeks, months, or even years, preventing you from working or doing many things you enjoy. Most lifting injuries are preventable.

Demonstration and Discussion Topics

- **Discuss** the types of objects in the shop that are heavy or awkward, and how each of those items could be handled safely.
 - **Tour the shop** with the students, and point out these hazards.
 - **Distribute** the student handout.
 - **Review** the safety tips.
 - **Discuss** how lifting and handling injuries can occur.
 - **Explain** what can be done in the workplace to minimize the risk of injuries due to handling and lifting (e.g., storing heavy items between chest and knee levels, and storing things in smaller packages).
 - **Make it real.** Tell at least two stories of injuries from your experience, or use the following examples:
 - A young worker was moving a crate of vegetables. He bent over to lift the crate from the floor. When he straightened up, he felt a sudden pain in his groin and was unable to continue work. He was diagnosed with a hernia that required surgery.
 - An apprentice unloading plywood decided to carry a heavy load by himself instead of asking for help. He felt a sudden, shooting pain down one leg and was unable to continue work. He later required back surgery for a herniated disk.
 - A young worker unloading parts decided to carry several heavy cartons instead of using a dolly. He felt a sudden shooting pain down one leg and was unable to continue work. He later required back surgery for a herniated disk.
- **Instruct** students to identify and report any safety concerns about lifting or handling items.
 - **Discuss** the attitude that “it won’t happen to me”. Remind students that an injury can and will happen if they take shortcuts or are careless.
 - **Answer** any questions or concerns students have.
 - **Set a good example** by working safely at all times.

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Resources

- Back Talk: An Owner's Manual for Backs
http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/back_talk.pdf
- Does your back hurt? A guide to preventing low back pain
http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/does_your_back_hurt.pdf
- Ergonomics Commentary 1 – Back Belts
http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/backbelts.pdf
- Lift/Lower Calculator
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/calculator/llc/default.htm>