

## Safe Lifting Tips

A leading cause of back injuries at work is lifting or handling objects incorrectly. Learning and following the correct method for lifting and handling heavy loads can help prevent injury and avoid back pain. Twisted backs are the leading types of back injuries. The following are key items to follow when planning to lift objects.

- **Know your limits**

- Will I need help moving this object? (if in doubt, ask for help).
- Do I need any tools, equipment or assistance from others?
- Most importantly, do not lift or handle more than you can safely manage!



- **Plan before you start – Think before you lift**

- What will you be lifting?
- Does the object pose a challenge? (weight or dimensions)
- Where will the object be moved from and to?
- Is there a clear path of travel between the two points?



- **Picking up the load**

- Warm up by stretching your legs and back muscles. (if it is safe for you to do so)
- Get close to the load and keep it close to you during the entire move.
- Place your feet to maintain good balance.
- Squat down and bend only your knees and hips.
- Keep the heaviest side of load next to your body.
- Lift the load with your legs, rather than placing pressure on your back.
- Don't hunch your back over the load while lifting.



- **Moving the load**

- Avoid twisting your back as you lift or walk with the load.
- Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain a balanced and stable posture.
- Keep your head up and shoulders level; facing the same direction as your hips.
- Look ahead while handling the load. Turn by moving your feet in the direction you wish to travel rather than twisting your back.
- Avoid wearing over-tight clothing or unsuitable footwear which may restrict your movement and balance



- **Setting down the load**

- Once at the new location, follow the same steps in reverse order.
- Remember to avoid bending over the load while lowering it.
- Place the load down and then adjust it to final position, if necessary.