

Any exercise is better than no exercise

lifestyle. You do not have to join a gym or lift weights, but you should exercise on a regular basis. Remember: any exercise is better than no exercise. Walk, play tennis or do some calisthenics... it doesn't matter as long as you begin slowly and work your way into more strenuous exercises.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

Before lifting any item, warm up your body. This does not mean formal stretching or yoga, this simply means walk around the building, swing your arms, stretch. Get the blood flowing!

If you will be lifting at work, stretch and warm up before starting work (coffee and Krispy Kreme donuts do not count). Also, warm up again after you have taken a long break, such as lunch.

If at all possible, get help in lifting an object. Two or more people can help tremendously in lifting an object. Remember, 50 pounds should be the maximum any one person should lift at one time.

Use a cart, dolly or forklift to move an object. It is best to use equipment that is sturdy and designed to carry objects.

You make the choice, so choose wisely!



CAGC Insurance Company

LOSS CONTROL/SAFETY
SOLUTIONS

PREVENTING BACK INJURIES



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KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

When we speak about Back Safety, we often think of the classic lifting technique and motto, “lift with your legs, not your back”. Although this is a simple slogan to remember, it does not take into account the many variables we face at work, home or at play. Understanding how your back works, the personal limits you might have, and the body’s own physical limitations are what we hope to learn. Arm yourself with knowledge, to protect your own back.

1. The “back” is not just bone, but a complex system of bone, ligaments, cartilage, muscles, tendons and nerves.
2. The “back” has a neutral position, where all of the elements making up the back are at rest, or ready for work.
3. When lifting, the human body has “Power Zones” where maximum work can take place.
4. Exercise, especially the stomach muscles, helps support the spine and keeps us less likely to injure ourselves.
5. Warm up prior to lifting or exerting force.
6. Always ask for help or use mechanical devices to lift for you.

7. Have a positive mental outlook. Recent medical studies have shown that a majority of back pain and problems is caused by STRESS.

PHYSIOLOGY

The picture on the cover of this brochure is what we often think is “the back”. The spine is a complex system, containing vertebrae (bone), discs (cartilage), nerve branches and the spinal cord.

We then have several layers of muscle which flexes the spine in multiple directions. Muscles can only pull in one direction, so we need at least two muscles to pull one way, then another to pull us back.

All of us, yes... all, have physiological problems with our backs. Our bodies have an amazing ability to adapt themselves and overcome any limitations placed on us at birth.

KEEP IT IN NEUTRAL

We are all familiar with the “stiff” example of lifting a box from the floor, lifting with the legs, not the back.

There is a natural curvature of the spine, at the neck, chest and lower back. These are known as the cervical, thoracic and lumbar curves, respectively. They make a natural “S” curve.

If we lift an object, and maintain these curves, or neutral position, our bones, muscles, etc. are less likely to be in an awkward position and cause a problem.

The stomach muscles support the curvature of your lower back.

REMEMBER THE POWER ZONE

Ergonomics is a fancy term for human-work interaction. Simply, this means the body has limits. We can only reach so far, pull so hard, or hold items for so long. We are limited by our bodies.

When dealing with Back Safety, all work should be kept directly in front of you. It is best to keep the work in an imaginative square, which starts at the chin, down to the waist, and from shoulder to shoulder. This is the power zone. Martial Arts teach that this is the zone where you can give the greatest blow while maintaining you balance.

Never reach behind you! This movement offers the greatest chance you will hurt yourself. Your body is completely out of position to do work.

IS EXERCISE A FOUR-LETTER WORD?

Exercise is a necessary part of a healthy

STRESS = PAIN