

Lifting Safety

Safe lifting practices are crucial for everyone no matter what industry you work in. Over time, repeated injury to the spine causes degeneration, which is the painful aging of spinal bones, discs, tendons and cartilage. Do not take your spine health for granted as aging will prove to be painful. Review the following lifting tips with your employees.



Toolbox Tips

HOW WE INJURE OUR SPINE

- Repetitive lifting
- Twisting while lifting, instead of turning on our feet
- Falling while carrying a load
- Slipping while carrying a load
- Losing grip, causing the load to shift
- Carrying bulky objects, with arms outstretched
- Carrying objects that are too heavy
- Uneven walking surfaces
- Climbing stairs while carrying objects
- Using the spine to do the lifting instead of your legs

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Do simple stretches for 5 to 10 minutes before beginning a long day of heavy lifting.
- Break down loads by making smaller trips.
- Find out what available machines can do the lifting for you. Ex. skid steer, loader, truck, dolly, etc.
- Use extension cords and longer air hoses, in order to leave generators, welders and compressors in the truck.
- Use wagons and dollies to move tool boxes, supplies, crates.
- Team lift — ask a coworker for help with heavy loads.
- Have deliveries unloaded as close as possible to where they're needed.
- Pick up trip hazards on stairs, walkways and use gravel to make ramps over footings or concrete pad edges.
- Wear proper footwear — no tennis shoes.
- Think about the lift — don't hurt yourself!
- Drink plenty of water which keeps muscles hydrated and flexing well.
- Use gloves that help the hands grip the load. Re-shape the load to make it easier to grasp.
- Plan the route and identify trip hazards, slip hazards and areas that can cause a fall, strain or sprain.

These advisory materials have been developed from national standards and sources believed to be reliable, however, no guarantee is made as to the sufficiency of the information contained in the material and MEM assumes no liability for its use. Advice about specific situations should be obtained from a safety professional.

Make machines do the work.



Don't treat your spine like a machine! Compressors and job boxes are too heavy for one person to lift.