



Safe Lifting and Your Back

An injury that results in a strain, sprain, torn muscle, tendon, ligament or joint is called a MSI (musculoskeletal injury).

This Safety Talk is to raise awareness of workplace hazards that can cause a MSI.

Work-related lifting injuries are some of the most common injuries in the construction industry. Training your employees on proper lifting techniques can help prevent injury.

The following safety information will provide you with training on assessing hazards that could lead to a MSI and instruct on implementing control measures to prevent a MSI.



Risk Assessment/Hazards

The following are identified as hazards that may result while lifting an object or load:

- Repetitive lifting, over and over.
- 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 our legs.

Control Measures/Safeguards

Implement the following safe work procedures to eliminate or reduce a MSI that may result while lifting an object or load:

- Break down loads. Break a case of 6 down to two loads of three.
- Use a machine such as a loader or dolly.
- Team lift - ask a coworker to help with the load.
- When getting supplies delivered, get them unloaded as close as possible to where they are needed.
- Pick up trip hazards on stairs and walkways.
- Wear proper footwear for the jobsite.

THINK ABOUT THE LIFT!

- Face the object
- Use a well balanced stance with one foot slightly ahead of the other.
- Bend at the knees, not at the back.
- Keep your back straight.
- Get a firm grip on the object with your hands and fingers. Use handles when present.
- Tighten your stomach muscles as you start to lift.
- Use your legs to lift.
- Pick up your feet and pivot to turn. Do not twist your back.
- Bend your knees to lower the object.

Thought Provoking Questions

What processes and activities on the jobsite most often require lifting?

What are the most awkward and heaviest objects workers lift?

What machines on the jobsite can do the lifting for you?

