



## Back & Shoulder Injury Prevention

Due to the nature of an individual's occupation, it's often difficult to avoid certain repetitive motions. However, it is still important that **all** workers practice safe lifting and handling in order to protect their back and shoulders from injury. Protect against back injury by:

- avoid lifting above shoulder height (this puts extra strain on your shoulders and back)
- don't try to catch falling objects
- whenever possible, push rather than pull (pushing allows you to keep a normal back position and puts less strain on the back)
- avoid excessive forceful movements – Ask: is there a tool you could use instead of your body?

**Practicing safe lifting habits can protect your back and shoulders from many injuries:**

- use mechanical lifting aids where possible
- employ a team lift

**If you must lift alone, use safe personal lifting practices:**

- size up your load before lifting
- make sure your intended path is clear
- get help if needed
- use a dolly or other lifting aids whenever possible
- get as close to the load as possible
- avoid twisting from the waist while lifting
- use a wide and well-balanced stance while lifting
- tighten your stomach muscles as you start the lift
- keep your lower back curved and lift with your legs
- pick up your feet to turn – do not twist
- lower the load with your legs while maintaining a normal back curve (lowering loads can injure your back just as easily as lifting)