



Safety Tips

A five-minute training series for PCOs.

Back Injuries

THINK
DON'T LIFT
AND TWIST

THINK
DON'T TRY TO
LIFT MORE THAN
YOU ARE ABLE

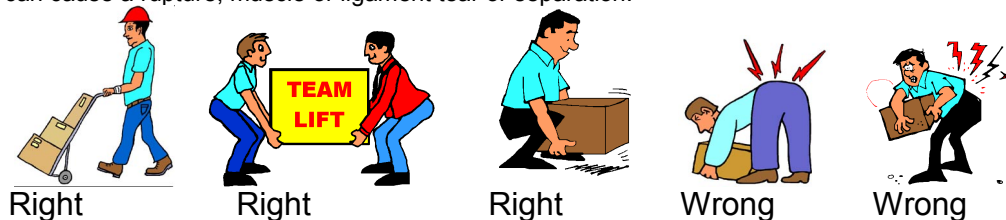
THINK
USE PROPER
LIFTING TECHNIQUE

Back injuries cause 20% of PestSure's employee accidents. There are two major causes of back injuries. Slips, trips & falls, which was discussed in a previous Safety Tip, and materials handling. Materials handling is any activity that requires lifting, pushing, pulling or carrying items of sufficient weight to cause the muscles to flex.

When bending at the hips to pick up an object, the weight ratio is increased to 10 to 1. Therefore, a 35 pound weight becomes 350 pounds due to the location of the pivot point, the hips. Not only are you lifting the weight at a 10 to 1 ratio, you are also lifting the weight of your body from the waist up. This is also at a 10 to 1 ratio. Therefore, lifting objects in this manner creates a problem.

To minimize the possibility of injury due to these materials handling activities, some steps to follow are as follows:

- Avoid lifting weights over 35 pounds by yourself. **If over 35 pounds, get help.**
- **Use a dolly or cart when possible.**
- Avoid twisting or turning while lifting. **Lift the object and then turn your whole body.**
- Do not pull objects. Pulling objects presents a much greater possibility of straining muscles. There is a much higher chance of slipping or losing your footing when pulling an object. **Push them.**
- When lifting, always keep your back straight. **Bend your knees! This eliminates the 10 to 1 lifting ratio problem.**
- **Look straight ahead while lifting.** Looking down stretches the neck and back.
- **Squat as close to the object**, to be lifted, **as possible.** This too, can prevent an increased lifting weight ratio.
- If possible, **avoid lifting objects above shoulder height.**
- **Consider wearing a back support or brace** if lifting is a high frequency task. However, extra training should be sought before using one.
- **If you feel a pain, while lifting, stop and report it to your supervisor immediately.** Do not continue as this can cause a rupture, muscle or ligament tear or separation.



Remember, you only have one back. Proper care, exercise, diet and job performance can prevent back injuries and pain.