

# Back Injury Prevention

*Presented by: Health and Safety Advisor*



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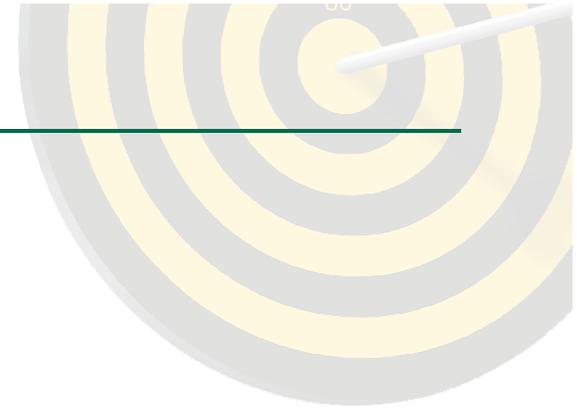
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# Session Objectives

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- You will be able to:



Understand how back injuries occur



Prevent back injuries



Use proper lifting, load carrying, and unloading techniques



Think intelligently about your back



# Why Do You Need To Know?

80% of Americans will have a back injury that requires medical attention

Back injuries are the second most common cause of days away from work, next to the common cold

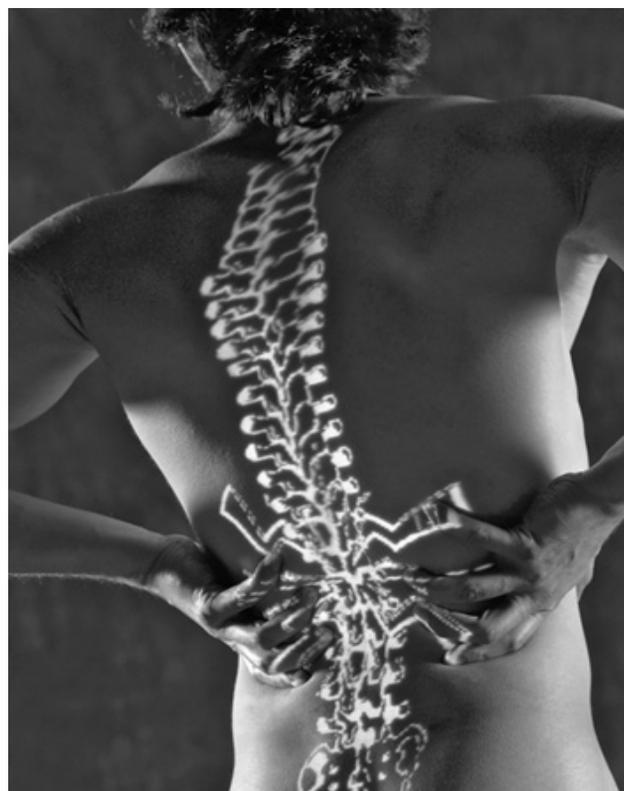
Injured backs are often subject to reinjury

In addition to missed work, there may be a lifetime of pain



# Why Back Injuries Occur

- The back has many interactive parts
  - Vertebrae, spinal cord, and disks
  - Muscles, ligaments, and tendons
- Injured when torn, stretched, bruised, strained or cut



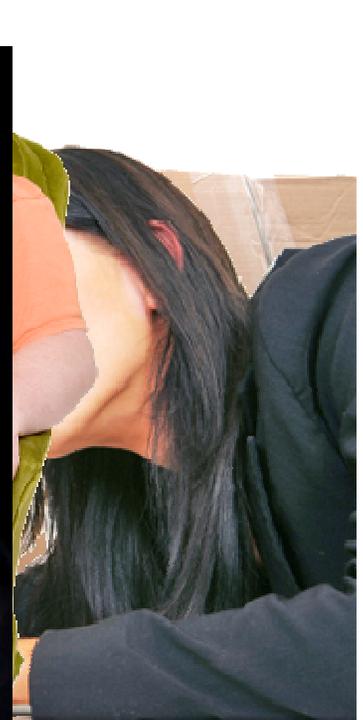
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# General Causes Of Back Injury

- Usually a combination of causes
  - Poor posture
  - Unconditioned back
  - Excess weight and potbellies
  - Bad lifting techniques
  - Underlying medical condition



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# Types of Back Injuries

## Strain

- Injury due to over-using or over-stretching your back

## Sprain

- Ligament in the back is torn or excessively stretched

## Bulging Disk

- Disk begins to come out from between two vertebrae

## Herniated Disk

- Disk begins to leak its cushioning fluid



**From the list below, select the activities that could cause a back injury:**

- ✓ Reaching
- ✓ Bad posture
- ✓ Tying your shoes
- ✓ Bending
- ✓ Twisting
- ✓ Sitting
- ✓ Using poor lifting techniques

**ALL OF THEM!**



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# Activities That Can Cause Back Injury

- Reaching
- Bending over
- Sitting
- Poor lifting technique



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# Back Injury Conditions and Causes

- Do you understand
  - Why back injuries happen?
  - Types of injuries?



# Injury Prevention— Maintain Proper Posture

- Maintain the back’s natural curves
- Stand straight
- Sit properly
- Improve your posture
- Stretch regularly



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# Injury Prevention— Condition Your Back

- Physical conditioning
- Stay flexible and limber
- Lose excess weight

**Consult your physician!**



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# Injury Prevention— Exercises

- Walk regularly
- Stretch and bend
- Do sit-ups
- Practice leg lifts
- Practice squats



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# Exercise

# Injury Prevention

## Fill in the blanks:

Try to maintain your body's natural curves when you are sitting.

Sometimes, a footrest helps maintain a proper position when you are sitting.

When standing, stand straight with your shoulders back, your head up, and your feet shoulder-width apart.



# Exercise

# Injury Prevention (cont.)

## Fill in the blanks:

A program of walking for 30 minutes a day will help strengthen muscles and prevent weight gain.

Physical conditioning of your back means not only improving your back muscles but also related muscles such as the ones in your stomach and thighs.

Staying flexible and limber is also important so you can bend and turn without injury.



# Safe Practices— Use Lifting Equipment

- Powered equipment such as forklifts, powered carts, and electric pallet jacks
- Hand trucks, carts, pallet jacks
- Cranes and hoists
- Patents
- Conveyors



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# Have a Safe Lifting Plan

- Size up the load
  - Weight, shape, and size
- Clear the path
  - Objects
  - Tight doorways or corners
- Unloading zone



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# Lift Properly

- Stand close with a wide stance
- Bend at the knees
- Pull the load close and grip it
- Tighten stomach, lift your head
- Rise using your legs



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# Lift Bags Properly

- Squat next to the bag
- Grab it at opposite corners
- Lift it up to your thigh or waist
- Stand up
- Put the load on your shoulder



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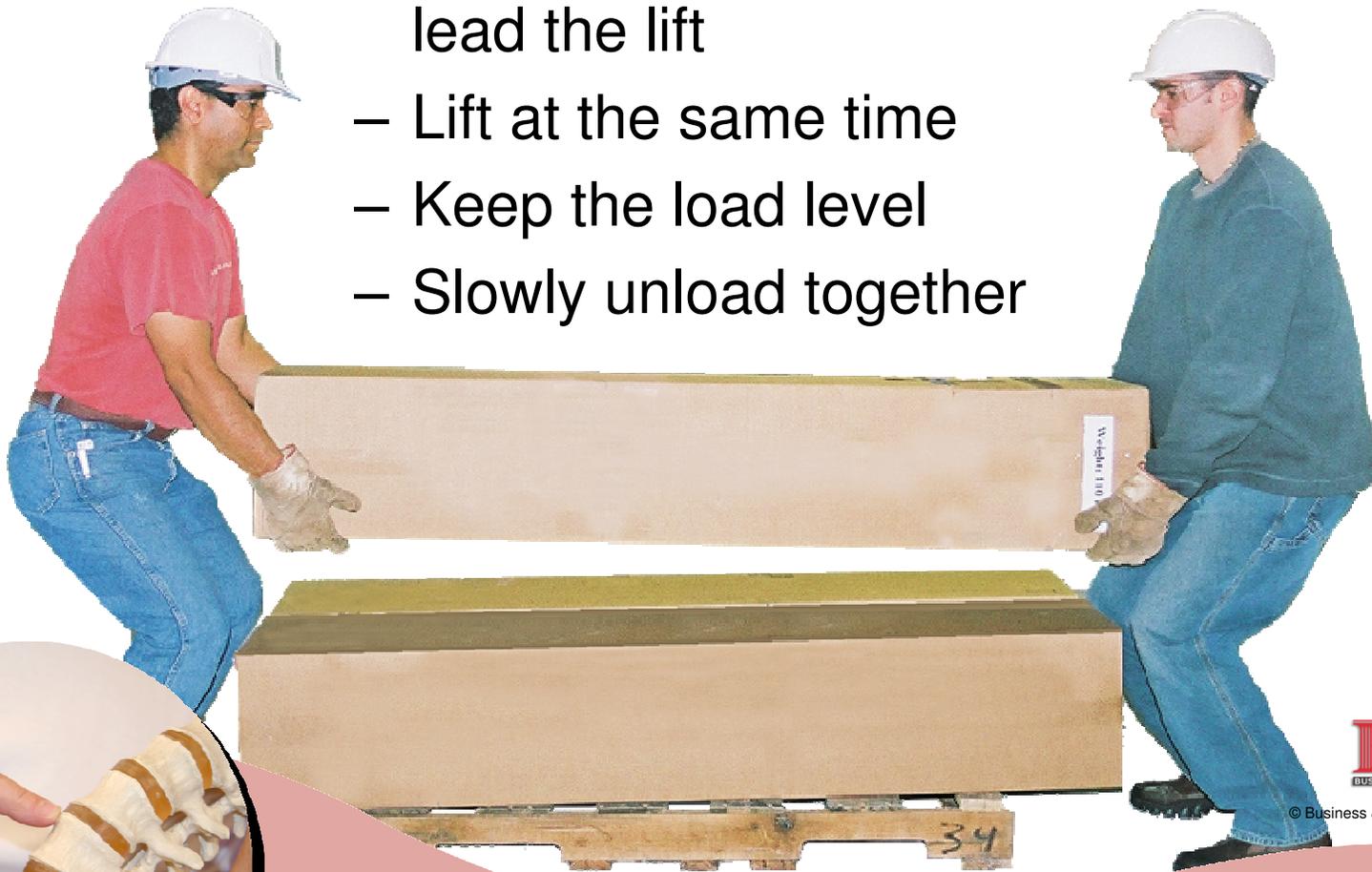
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# Team Lifting

- Designate a person to lead the lift
- Lift at the same time
- Keep the load level
- Slowly unload together



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# Carry the Load Properly

- Make sure you can see
- Take small, stable steps
- Do not twist your back



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# Unload Properly

- Squat with the load
- Do not bend your back over the load
- Be careful of fingers



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# Handling Overhead Loads

- Stand facing the load
- Slide the load close to your body
- Maintain good posture



# Handling Long Loads

- Pick up one end
- Place the balance point on your shoulder
- Watch the ends



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# Think About Your Back

- Be diligent
- Think long term
- Don't try to lift too much
- Consider your back in all things you do



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# What's Wrong Here?

- Moves heavy boxes
- Tilts box toward his body
- Rotates box on bottom edge
- Grabs for box as it starts to fall
- Strains his back



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# What's Wrong Here? (cont.)

- Was the box too heavy?
- Was the box too big to move alone?
- Were proper lifting techniques followed?
- Was the back belt a factor?



# Injury Prevention and Safe Practices

- Do you understand safe lifting techniques?
- Do you understand carrying loads, unloading, overhead loads, and long loads?



# Key Points to Remember!



Maintain proper back posture



Exercise regularly



Use available lifting equipment and have a lifting plan



Use your legs; bend them when lifting



Always think about your back

