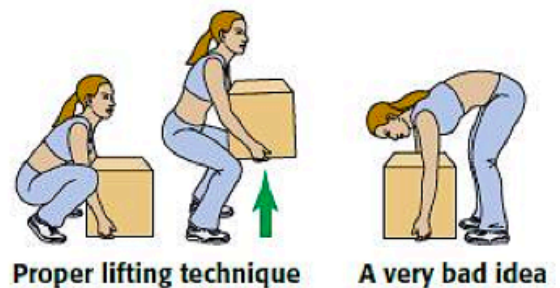


CORRECT LIFTING

Lifting injuries are a common cause of back pain. You can protect yourself against damage with good lifting habits, both at home and in the workplace.

When you lift, your spine is put under stress. Twisting or jerking while lifting and carrying can injure the small joints of the spine. The discs that separate the vertebrae (spinal bones) and the ligaments, which hold the vertebrae together, are also at risk. The discs are composed of a jelly-like core, surrounded by a strong fibrous ring. With repeated unsafe lifting, the fibrous ring or its supporting ligaments may tear or rupture. This is commonly known as a disc bulge or herniation.

Lifting while bent forward will increase the stress on your spine. Contributing to this stress are factors like the weight of the load, how far it is held from your body, how often and how fast you lift and how long you hold the load.



CORRECT LIFTING con't

To protect your spine from injury, always attempt to take the following steps:

- Get a firm footing with your feet apart for a stable base.
- Bend your hips and knees instead of bending at the waist. This allows the leg muscles to take the load and not the spine.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles – these muscles support the spine when lifting
- Ensure you have a strong grip and the load is as close to you as possible.
- The closer it is to your spine the less force it exerts on your back
- Brace yourself for the lift but continue to breathe normally through the lift.
- Lift steadily and do not jerk the load
- Look straight ahead, not down.
- Keep your back straight and avoid twisting or bending to the side.
- To lower the object, place your feet as you did to lift, tighten stomach muscles and bend your hips and knees.

