

# Newsletter

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## Preventing Back Injuries

### Proper techniques for lifting and carrying objects

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As much as 80% of the adult population will experience lower back injuries over their lifetimes. These injuries are usually by improper lifting techniques and overuse. By using proper lifting techniques along with stretching and strengthening exercises, you can reduce the risk of back injury.

There are many techniques used in lifting and carrying objects that can support your back and prevent injury. However, the best technique for lifting is the diagonal lift. Your feet are apart, with one foot slightly ahead of the other. This gives you a wide base of support, providing more stability, more energy and more power. Bend your knees and squat down; keep your back arched and your head up while lifting. This position allows more power to come from the larger muscles of the legs and keeps the weight off your back.



When lifting and carrying, keep objects close to the body. The farther from the body you carry an object, the more stress you place on your back. Do not rush or jerk as you lift and do not twist or side bend. These bad habits apply more stress on your back, especially during repetitive lifts and will cause serious injury later.

When carrying objects, use correct posture – stand up straight. Do not stoop or walk in a bent-over posture. Carry most of the load to the front and close to the body, but when carrying for long distances, support the load on your shoulder. If the object is too heavy, get help.

Although nothing can totally prevent an accident from happening, using the proper lifting and carrying techniques, as well as maintaining an exercise and stretching program, will reduce your chances of getting hurt. Also, before you begin any exercise program, have your doctor perform a physical examination to rule any possible problems.