

Reducing the risk of back injuries from lifting

Every year, many workers injure their backs on the job. These injuries often occur when workers lift heavy loads by hand. Poor posture, bending over, and twisting can play a role in these injuries.

Signs and symptoms of back injuries

Common signs and symptoms include the following:

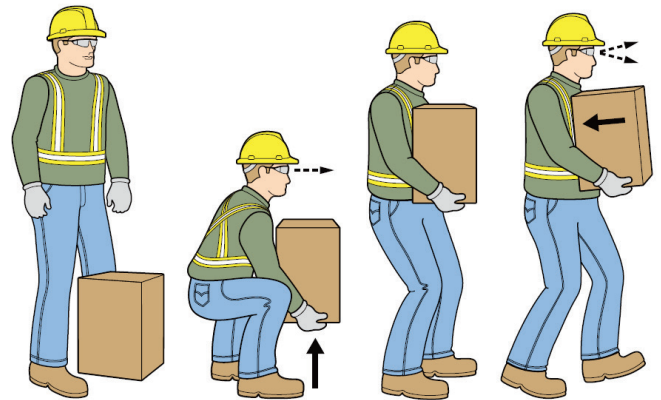
- Aching, burning, or shooting pain
- Tingling or numbness
- Fatigue, weakness, or inability to move
- Swelling or tenderness

How to reduce the risk

- Follow the lifting policy and load limits that your employer or the site supervisor has put in place at your worksite.
- Use available lifting supports and aids (dollies, carts, etc.) rather than lifting heavy loads by hand.
- Ask for help or help co-workers when needed.
- When lifting a load by hand, use proper manual-lifting techniques (see next section).
- Wear safety footwear and gloves.

Use proper manual-lifting techniques

- **Stretch before lifting.**
- **Ensure the walkway is clear from start to finish.**
- **Get as close to the load as possible.**
- **Keep a wide base of support.** Your feet should be



shoulder-width apart with one foot slightly ahead of the other.

- **Squat down instead of bending over.**
- **Keep good posture.** Look straight ahead. Keep your back straight, chest out, and shoulders back.
- **Lift slowly.** Tighten your stomach muscles as you start to lift.
- **Hold the load correctly.** Keep your back as vertical as possible. Keep the load close to you.
- **Lead with your hips.** When you change direction, keep your shoulders in line with your hips as you move.
- **Set down the load properly.** Squat with your knees and hips, just as you did when you picked up the load.

OHSR Reference: Guidelines 4.46

Project:

Address:

Employer:

Supervisor:

Date:

Time:

Shift:

Number in crew:

Number attending:

Other safety concerns or suggestions:

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Record of those attending:

Name: (please print)	Signature:	Company:
1.		
2.		
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15.		

Manager's remarks:

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Manager:

(Signature)

Supervisor:

(Signature)

For more information on health and safety requirements for crane operations in B.C., refer to the *Workers Compensation Act* and the OHS Regulation on worksafebc.com.