

# SAFETY MANAGEMENT SERVICES **CONSTRUCTION SAFETY BREAKS**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR SAFETY CONCERNS: \_\_\_\_\_

DISCUSSION LEADER: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Today's Topic: Back Safety

Back strains are one of the most common injuries in construction. The nature of construction work requires a lot of lifting, and these lifts are often not set up in an ideal manner. Using proper lifting techniques and other preventative measures can help reduce the stress we place on our backs.

### Discussion: What are some of the more difficult manual lifts we do?

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### The Risks: Painful and Disabling Injuries

Back injuries are not only painful but can be difficult to treat and recover from as well. Because almost everything we do involves using our backs both on and off the job, a back injury affects all aspects of our lives. And once one back injury occurs, a second back injury is more likely.

When we bend or lift an object, we put stress on our back. Over time, this can lead to wear on the parts of your back and spine. In addition to the degeneration over time, an over-exertion can lead to a disc herniation. The muscles and ligaments of the back can also be strained or torn.

## Solution: Use the Proper Lifting Technique

The best way to reduce the chance of back injury is to eliminate the lift. Use forklifts, hoists, dollies, carts, and other equipment to do the heavy lifting for you.

When equipment is not available or not able to be used, another way to reduce the chance of injury is to use the proper lifting technique. Follow the steps below when lifting:

1. Plan your lift; size up the load and make sure your path is clear.
2. Get as close to the load as possible while still being able to bend your knees.
3. Bend at the knees to pick up the object, tighten your stomach muscles, and maintain the natural curvature of your spine.
4. Avoid twisting once the object has been lifted (pivot with the feet instead).
5. When lowering the object, remember to continue to use your legs and maintain your back position.

In addition, remember to avoid lifting over the shoulder. This increases the chance of shoulder and neck injuries. And if you drop an object, do not attempt to catch it, as this will put more stress on your back as you will be out of position.

When using a two-person lift, remember to lift in unison so one person does not bear the brunt of the lift.

## Know Your Limits!

What equipment do we have onsite that can be used to reduce manual lifting?

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What is proper lifting technique?

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