



# Education Module

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## “Protect Your Back”

### Objective: Proper Lifting Techniques

#### Definition

Back strain is a common cause of injuries and the leading cause of absences from work. There are various reasons for strained backs, but the leading cause is improper lifting techniques. Stress to your employees the importance of proper lifting. Practicing correct lifting techniques will cut down on injuries and relieve the strain on our Health Care, Insurance, and Workers' Compensation systems.

#### Information

- Stretch a bit before you lift to prevent muscle strain.
- Plan your lift. Know where you are going with the load.
- Make sure the path is clear to where you will be carrying your load.
- Store heavy items between knee and shoulder height – At this height it is easiest to reach.
- Have delivery people unload and deliver merchandise as close as possible to where it will be stored.
- Do not carry more than one item at a time.
- Team Lift - Do not be afraid to ask for help if the load is too heavy or bulky.

**TRAINING TIP** – Have someone demonstrate and practice proper lifting techniques with employees.

#### Follow These Steps When Lifting

1. Plant your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Bend at your knees. Keep your back straight.
3. Use your leg muscles to lift.
4. Lift smoothly. Do not stand up quickly.
5. Hold load firmly and close to your body.
6. Turn your feet with the load when changing directions. Twisting your back while carrying a load could cause injury.
7. Do not stretch or over extend to pick up or set down loads.