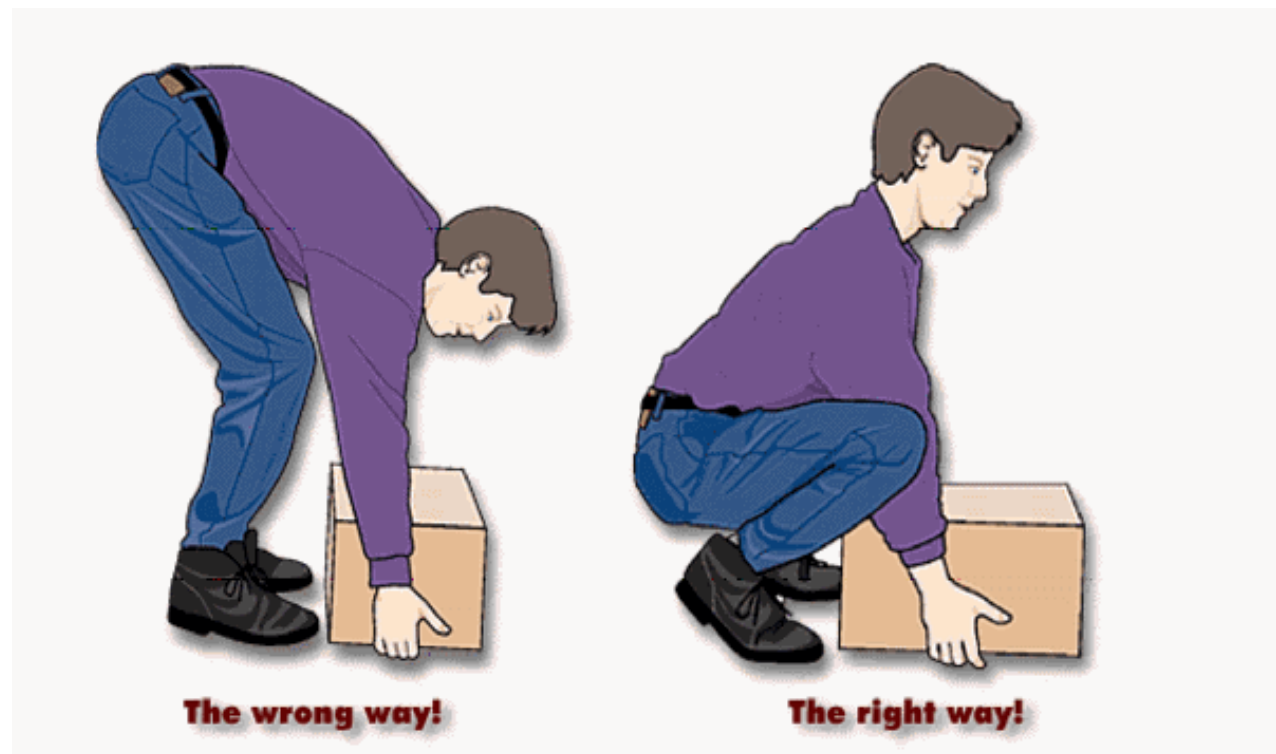


Preventing Back Injuries

Your back is in motion all day, every day, even when you sleep. It bends when you sit, twists when you turn, lifts when you stand and supports you when you walk. An injured back can be uncomfortable or it can be disabling. By learning a few back injury prevention techniques, you may be able make your work day safer.

Here are some tips:

- When you are driving, make sure your back is well-supported and that you use good posture. To prevent back strain, keep the steering wheel close enough that your knees are slightly flexed and higher than your hips.
- When you have to lift an object, always plan ahead. Decide how you are going to pick up the load, carry it and set it down. Then check the route for obstructions. Always get assistance if the load is too heavy or too awkward.
- As you lift, position your feet close to the load and squat – don not bend down. Rise to a standing position, using the strong muscles in your legs rather than the weaker ones in your back. Don't twist your body when carrying the load. Lower yourself to a squatting position as you set it down.



- Take several short rest breaks at work by standing up and doing a few minutes of stretching exercises. If your job requires you to stand all day, try placing one foot on a slightly higher surface to relax tight back muscles.
- When you sleep at night, curl up on your side and place a pillow between your knees for added support. If you sleep on your back, place pillows under your bent knees to relieve the strain on your back muscles.

