

# eplica ▶▶ Safety Lines

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Your back is one part of the body that can never quite return to its former delicate structure after an injury, because repairs are rarely 100 percent effective. That's why it's so important to take precautions that can prevent the injury in the first place.

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In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, an employer who has ten or more employees needs to have an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) in writing.

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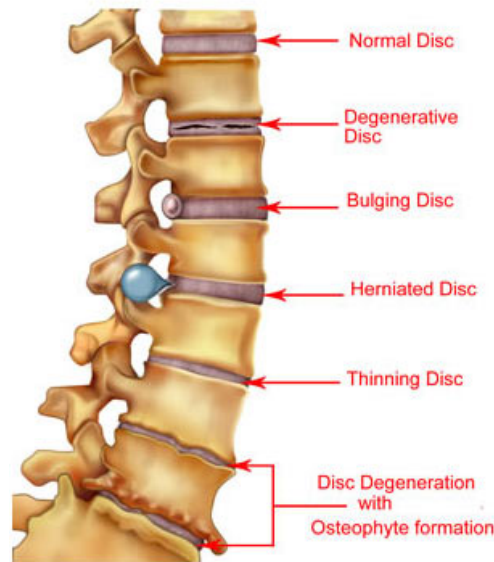
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## Back Safety - A Good Habit



According to the National Safety Council, 400,000 workers suffer new back injuries each year. These injuries occur everywhere, not just in the stockrooms and warehouses. Strains and sprains, fractures, and bruises are the most common injuries. These are most often the result of using improper lifting methods, although climbing in and out of trucks, pushing heavy objects, sitting with poor posture or an awkward reach or bend can do the damage.

Translated into lost time from work, such aches and pains cost millions of dollars a year, most of which is spent on pain killers in a search for relief. Because we bring most muscle aches and pains on ourselves, the best medicine is knowledge and a dose of prevention.

When you straighten up after bending over, the muscles, vertebrae, ligaments, and discs in your back bear more than a quarter of a ton of strain. If you lift with your back at the same time, the weight of the object is multiplied 15 times. Your back is one part of the body that can never quite return to its former delicate structure after an injury, because repairs are rarely 100 percent effective. That's why it's so important to take precautions that can prevent the injury in the first place.

Probably everyone has been told not to stoop over to lift. Your leg muscles, not your backbone, should do the work. Unfortunately, stooping over

to lift is a habit we form during childhood. One way to break an old habit is to start a new one. Proper lifting is a learned skill that should be practiced to keep the proper lifting methods fresh in your mind.

### Here are the techniques of safe lifting:

- ▶▶ Make sure the path you'll be taking is free of obstructions or slipping hazards.
- ▶▶ Know your lifting ability and get help with heavy or awkward loads.
- ▶▶ Face the load you are trying to lift.
- ▶▶ Bend at the knees with your feet about 20 inches apart (approximately shoulders' width), one foot slightly ahead of the other.
- ▶▶ Grasp the load and gain control before you attempt the lift.
- ▶▶ Watch out for nails or other protrusions that could cause cuts or other types of injuries.
- ▶▶ Keep the load close to your body.
- ▶▶ Lift gradually with your legs, keeping your back straight without twisting or turning; don't jerk the load.
- ▶▶ When you set the load down, watch for pinch points.
- ▶▶ To put the load down, just reverse the steps, lowering with your legs, placing your feet in the proper position, and keeping the load close to your body.
- ▶▶ To lift a load to a point above your shoulders, plan ahead so you can rest the load about waist high, then change your grip and finish the lift. An even better idea is to get help.

### Additionally, these suggestions may help you on the job:

- Gear your activity to your age and physical condition. Physical exertion is an excellent body builder, but it should not be carried to excess. Stop and rest when you feel tired.
- When entering or leaving a truck cab, use the handgrips and make sure the step-ups are dry and clear of debris.
- If you have a job that allows little movement, sitting or standing for long periods, it is important to watch your posture and change your working position as often as you can. Take stretching breaks throughout the day. Rest muscles that are constantly in use.

So take time each day to remember good back safety habits. You can use your head to save your back.



## March Safety Tip:

### An Accident Proof Lifestyle

Here's one safety step you may not have thought of:

Take care of yourself. Regular exercise makes you less injury prone. And don't forget sleep--when you're well-rested, you can better avoid everyday hazards, both at home and at work.

**Remember:** Staying healthy is one of the best ways to stay safe!

## Contact Us

Editor in Chief & Writer  
CLAUDIA C. HARO

Editorial Consultant  
& Writer  
JEFF ADCOCK

Staff Writer  
APRIL FLAK

Contact us:  
[allsafety@epicaservices.com](mailto:allsafety@epicaservices.com)

Or visit us online.

## Injury Illness Prevention Program - IIPP

In California, every employer is required by law to provide a safe and healthful workplace to his/her employees. In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, an employer who has ten or more employees needs to have an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) in writing. What should you expect to see in an IIPP? It is a written plan that has the following elements?

- Management commitment/assignment of responsibilities
- Safety communications system with employees
- System for assuring employee compliance with safety work practices
- Scheduled inspections/evaluation system
- Accident investigation
- Procedures for correcting unsafe/unhealthy conditions
- Safety and health instruction

- Recordkeeping and documentation training and instruction
- Recordkeeping and documentation

Although a Safety Program has most of the elements required in an IIPP, it is still not considered an IIPP unless all the required elements are included.

One of the first items that an OSHA inspector/auditor will ask for once they have been introduced to your Safety Company Representative will usually be the IIPP. A fine will be assessed if the company is not found in compliance.

A copy of the IIPP can be found on the Safety page on the intranet for internal staff. Also, a copy of the IIPP is printed in the Policy and Procedures packet for temporary staff to review.

## OSHA Most Frequently Cited Standards

The following were the top 10 most frequently cited standards in fiscal year 2008 (October 2007 through September 2008):

1. Scaffolding, general requirements, construction
2. Fall protection, construction
3. Hazard communication standard, general industry
4. Control of hazardous energy (lockout/tagout), general industry
5. Respiratory protection, general industry

6. Electrical, wiring methods, components and equipment, general industry
7. Powered industrial trucks, general industry
8. Ladders, construction
9. Machines, general requirements, general industry

Even if your company does not work with items on this list, now would be a great time to evaluate your equipment, facilities and safety programs to ensure you are in full OSHA Compliance for 2009!

## When We Change Our Clocks

Daylight Savings Time begins for most of the United States at 2 a.m. on the second Sunday of March. Time reverts to standard time at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday of November.

When Daylight Savings Time begins or ends make it a habit to not only change your clocks, but do a few other semi-annual tasks that will improve safety in your home.

### Every 6 months when you reset your clocks:

-Check and replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms.

-Prepare a disaster supply kit for your house (water, food, flashlights, batteries, blankets).

-Make a "car-emergency kit" and put this in your vehicle! (Don't know what to include? Do an Internet search for "car emergency kit" and you'll find lots of ideas!) Be sure to add cold-weather gear to your general car-emergency kit each fall.

-Check home and outbuilding storage areas for hazardous materials. Discard (properly, please) any which are outdated, no longer used, or in poor condition. Move any which are within reach of kids or pets.

-Check and discard expired medications - those dates really DO have meaning - some very common over-the-counter medications can cause serious problems due to change through aging.

## March Safety Quote

"It is better to lose *one minute* in life... than to lose *life* in a minute."