proActive Safety Services

Weekly Safety Meeting

Train. Protect. Prevent.

Avoiding Back Injuries

Back pain is one of the most common ailments for a construction worker or any person that is constantly lifting heavy objects in the work place. A study in New England on four different construction sites with a total of 172 workers interviewed 75% of them reported having back pain at some time within three months. This will lead to less effective work while at the job site as well as a decrease in the mental health of these workers.

Stretch Before Lifting

Conducting a stretch and flex before lifting or beginning the work day can increase circulation and decrease the risk of an injury. A brief 1 to 2 minute stretch is also a great idea for after breaks.

How Can We Avoid Back Pain?

While at work improper lifting of heavy objects is the number one reason for back pain. Workers should be discouraged from attempting to lift objects too heavy for them to lift with proper form. While lifting always keep the load close to your body. Holding it farther away will create more of a load on the back which will increase risk for injury. Always lift with your legs. An easy way to remember this is to not bend at the waist to pick something up. Focus on bending and raising at the knees. At not point should the spine look rounded, the natural curvature of the back should be consistently held throughout the lift. Twisting while lifting can quickly lead to a back injury. Focus on keeping your back straight and getting your feet pointed toward the place you will set the object down.

Maintain Good Posture

A healthy back can be maintained with proper lifting techniques and great posture throughout your day. While standing, stand with the spine erect maintaining the natural curvature of the spine keeping your head in a neutral position. When sitting, use a sturdy seat where you can keep your back upright without slouching to the side or down in the chair.

Use Proper Lifting Techniques

To avoid back injuries use proper lifting technique as we have discussed in depth earlier. As well as maintain good posture throughout the day. If something is too heavy for a worker to lift alone, ensure another worker helps them with the lift. If another worker isn't available, try to decrease the size of the load before lifting.

Back health is essential for line workers to be at their best. When back health declines, work productivity declines. Can anyone recall a time that they injured their back? How did it happen? Could it have been prevented?

Work Site Review: **Hazards/Safety Suggestions**

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_____

Company Name: _____ Work Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Employee Signatures: **(continue on back of sheet if necessary)**

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced , or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness)

Manager/Supervisor's Signature: _____

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