

Protecting your back when lifting and carrying: safety tips and lumbar support belts

Back problems head the list of work-related injuries, with workers in certain professions facing more risks. Different factors can increase these risks: repetitive stressors, load transport, and some movements used in executing tasks.

The best way to protect your back from harm and avoid accidents is to pay close attention to how you move every day. Here are some tips on how to execute movements safely, especially when it comes to lifting and carrying.

The first rule to moving anything: use your head, not your back. That means plan ahead. For example, make sure that the areas you will go through are clear of anything that you could trip on, and that nothing blocks your path. Also make sure that you will be walking on a safe, steady, slip-free surface.

If a load seems too heavy for you, ask for help.

A load should be carried close to one's centre of gravity (close to the body). Bend your knees and bring the object as close to your feet as possible before lifting. This way, you make sure your whole body will work, not just your back.

Lift by keeping the back straight. Never round out your back while lifting. Once the load is off the ground, bring it to waist level.

Avoid twisting your upper body when carrying a load. Always keep your head and your back aligned with your legs—they should remain in the same axis. If you need to rotate or turn around, use your legs and feet, not your upper body.

When you get to your destination, or need to put the object down, bend your knees in exactly the same way you did when you lifted: perform a squatting motion, keep your back straight, and keep the object close to you. And do NOT round out your back as you set the object down.

Another suggestion to help protect your back: **Adjustable Lumbar Support Belts**. These types of belts help maintain proper posture and body mechanics during different activities.