In the workplace, when you are lifting or moving heavy objects, or doing strenuous physical labor on a daily basis, your back can wear down over time. Learn how to avoid injuries with safe and proper techniques.

Before lifting and carrying a heavy object, take a few moments to assess the situation:

- How far will you have to carry the load?
- Is the way clear of clutter, cords, slippery areas, overhangs, stairs, curbs, or uneven surfaces?
- Are there closed doors? Ask someone to hold a door open or place a wedge under the door to hold it open.
- Once you pick the load up, will you be able to see over the load, or will the load block your view?
- Can the load be disassembled, carried in pieces, and then reassembled?
- Take a few moments to "size up the load." Test the weight by lifting a corner of the object. If it is too heavy or if the object is an odd shape, STOP! Ask for help or use a push cart or mechanical assistance.

Quick Take

- Assess the situation before lifting or carrying a load.
- Use proper lifting techniques regardless of the load size.
- Please contact EHRS to schedule training on back safety.

Proper Lifting

- The key to lifting safely is keeping your back straight or slightly arched. NEVER USE YOUR BACK TO LIFT!
- Start the lift by putting your feet close to the object. Get a firm footing.
- Center your body over your feet.
- Squat down like a professional weightlifter, bending your knees.
- Keep your back straight or slightly arched.
- You want your legs to do the lifting, not your back.
- Grasp the load securely with your hands, and pull the load close to you.
- Smoothly lift by straightening the knees.
- Setting the load down is the reverse of lifting.

If you repeat an unhealthy position or movement, small injuries begin to add up. If you do not change how or what you are doing, more serious injuries can occur.