



How to get through a day's work and still have something left over

The bending, twisting, and lifting that you do on the job is hard on your back.

Forward bending is an awkward posture that puts a lot of stress on your back. Bending stretches the ligaments and muscles and can pull the joints of the back into unstable positions. Over time this posture can stretch the back part of the disc, leading to damage. In this posture the over-stretched muscles of the back are less able to protect the ligaments, joints, and discs.

Twisting jams the joints of the back together, while forcing others apart. Tight ligaments and muscles can be pulled excessively. The outer casing of the discs can be damaged by constant twisting forces.

Lifting while bending forward or twisting or carrying a heavy load can damage your back. Lifting also becomes a risk if the back is not positioned or moved properly with the load.



Tips for reducing the risk of injury to your back

There are three ways of reducing the stress on the back from your job.

Look at your job, equipment, and procedures:

- Reduce the weights you lift.
- Reduce the distance you carry a load.
- Reduce the amount you twist.
- Reduce the frequency of lifting.
- Lift in a safe range.

Use your body correctly to do the job:

- Keep the load close to the body.
- Keep your feet apart for a stable stance.
- Position your feet prior to lifting to reduce twisting.
- Don't lift beyond your safe limit. Get help!

Take care of your back by stretching and exercising.

- Include a brief warm-up as part of your routine.
- If you work bent over, stand up and do a "back bend" at least every hour.
- If you stand for long periods, or work overhead, squat or bend the spine from time to time.