

AUGUST 3, 2012

THUMBS Up HEALTH

West Jefferson Medical Center • Budget Saver • West Jeff Fitness Center

Back Safety and the "Power" Position

You now know that maintaining the neutral (slightly arched) position in the lower back is one of the keys to having a healthy back. It is important to maintain this neutral position when sitting as well as when lifting objects or swinging a golf club. Athletes and coaches call it the "Power" position. To find the neutral position of the back, stand up and tuck your buttocks under. In this position you should feel the curve in your lower back disappear (flat back). Next, thrust your chest and stomach out to the front and stick your buttocks out to the rear. You will feel your lower back curve increase (sway back). It is undesirable to spend a lot of time in either the flat back or sway back postures. Now, return to the neutral (Power) position, which is actually somewhere between a stooped, flat back posture and the excessive sway back posture.

To bend fully backward and forward occasionally is fine; it helps you maintain good circulation and flexibility. Spending long periods of time in either position is stressful for your back, especially if you are twisting or lifting at the same time. For example, many golfers bend the back forward into the flat back posture when they swing. This is probably the number one reason so many golfers have back problems.

Once again, find your neutral position, then press your finger tips against your stomach muscles. As you do this, tighten your stomach muscles and make the front of your abdomen firm. Get the idea? Find your neutral position, then tighten your abdominal muscles to stabilize your lower back in this position. You should maintain this protective position for your back when lifting or when swinging a golf club. With practice, it is possible to maintain stability without feeling stiff or awkward. It is important to maintain this neutral position when sitting or standing, too. You may need a back support or cushion to help you maintain good posture if you already have a back problem or spend a lot of time doing stressful activities. Can you find your neutral posture sitting? Remember, flat back - sway back - neutral, then stabilize.

see reverse





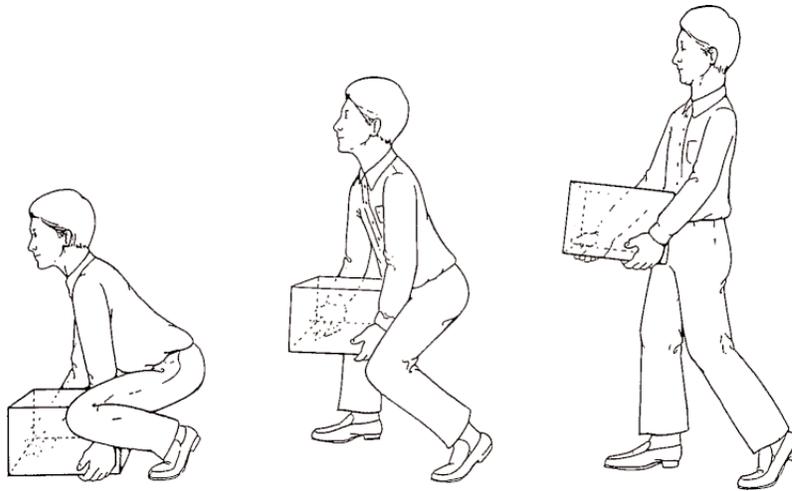
Flat Back



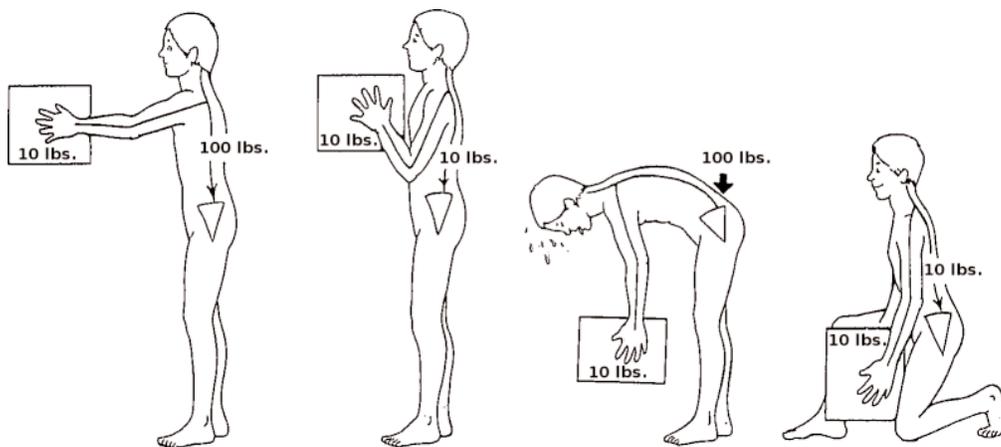
Sway Back



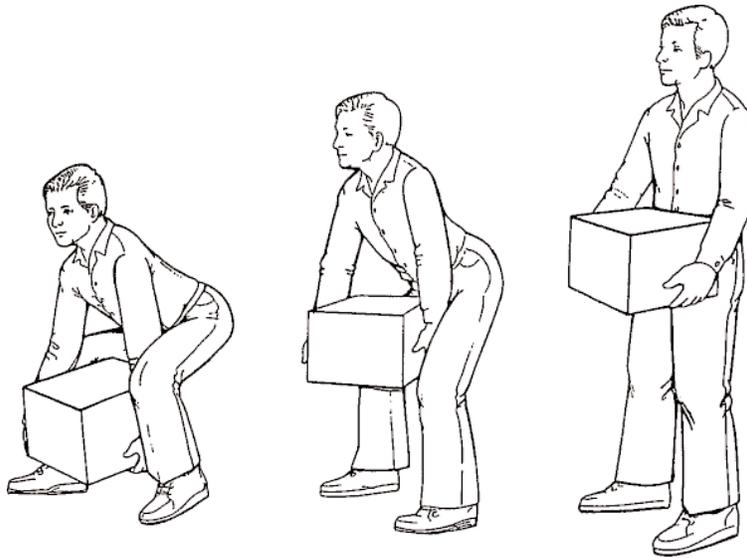
Neutral



The Diagonal Lift Squat, Head Up, Back Arched, Feet Spread One Foot Ahead as You Lift



Keep Weight Close to Body



The Power Lift Partial Squat, Head Up, Back Arched, Feet Spread One Foot Ahead as You Lift

Body Mechanics

Lifting, carrying and reaching - it's not how much you lift or carry, but how you do it. Here are some ways to use your body in the correct manner in work situations

General Lifting Rules:

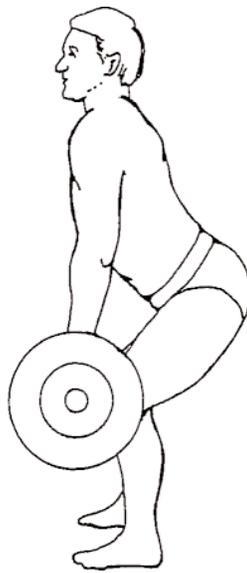
- Keep head high, chin tucked in and back in the "power" position.
- Do as professional weight lifters do - keep back arched when lifting.
- Keep weight close to body and stand up straight.
- Use proper lift technique to get weight in close and maintain a wide, balanced base of support.



Plan Ahead Test the Load Before Lifting



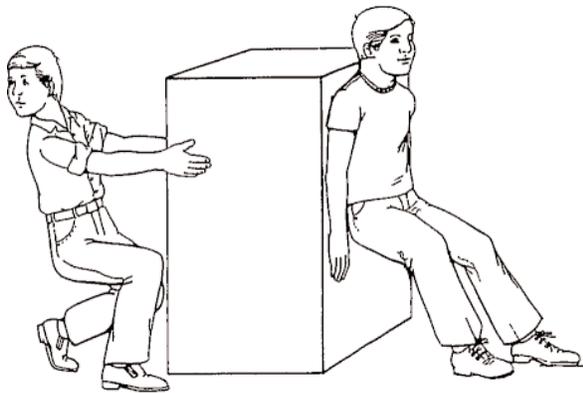
Don't Jerk as You Lift



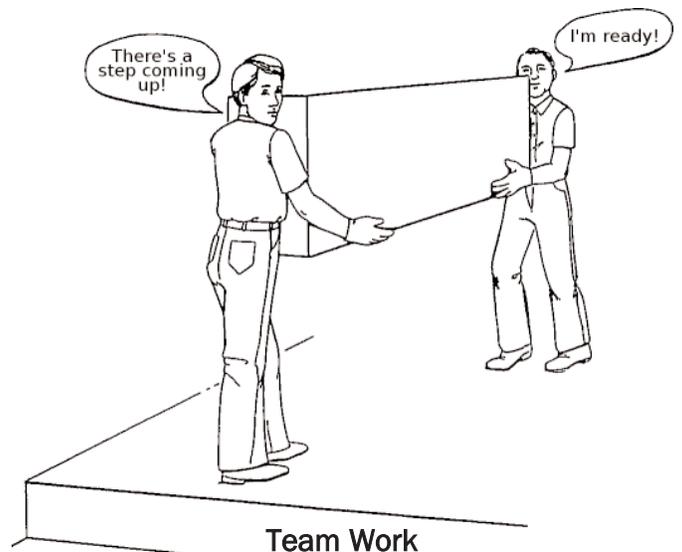
Keep Back in "Power" Position When Lifting Keep Head and Shoulders Up

General Rules While Working:

- Clear your path.
- Keep feet apart for good balance.
- Wear comfortable, cushioned, non-slip shoes.
- Protect yourself.



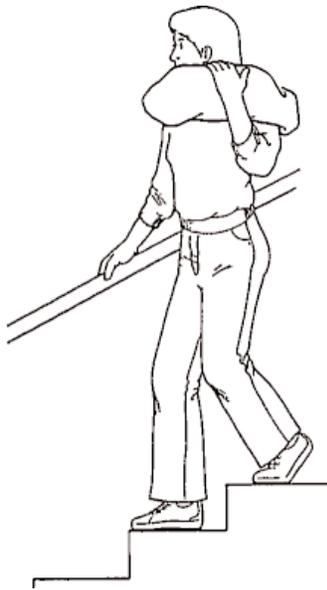
Push or Pull Rather Than Lift Pushing Is Best



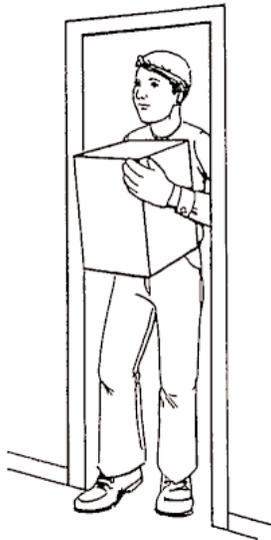
Team Work

Team Work for Heavy Loads

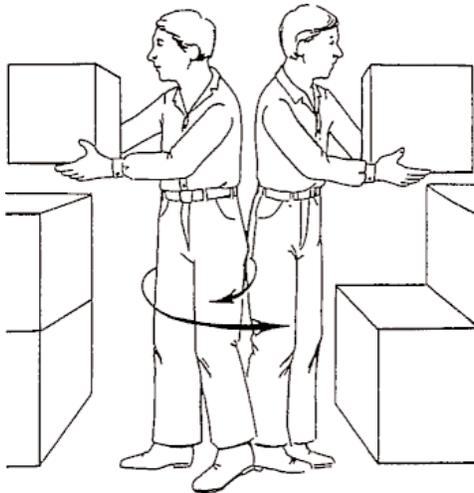
- Size up the load. Get help if it is too heavy.
- When two or more carry a load, one person should act as the leader. Be sure you can see where you are going.
- You can push twice as much as you can pull.



Support the Load on Your Shoulder When Carrying for Long Distances



Allow for Clearance



Pivot; Don't Twist



RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Grab-and-Go Snack Mix

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 1 teaspoon canola or corn oil
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup shelled unsalted pumpkin seeds
- 3/4 to 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice or apple pie spice
- 2 cups multigrain or whole-wheat cereal squares with maple syrup and brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sweetened dried cranberries or sweetened dried cherries

Cooking Instructions

Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and lightly spray with cooking spray.

In a large nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the honey for 2 minutes, or until it just comes to a boil. Stir in the walnuts, pecans, pumpkin seeds, and pie spice. Cook for 3 minutes, or until the mixture begins to turn golden, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat.

Immediately stir in the cereal and dried fruit until well coated, about 30 seconds. Pour onto the baking sheet, using the back of a spoon to quickly spread in a smooth, thin layer. Sprinkle with the salt. Let cool completely, about 45 minutes. Break into 1-inch pieces. Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

Cook's Tip

Pumpkin seeds and pie spices make this snack mix different from the norm. It's full of crunchy goodness from nuts and grains.

NUTRITION ANALYSIS

(per serving)

Calories: 138	Total Fat: 6 g
Saturated Fat: .5 g	Monounsaturated Fat: 2.5 g
Polyunsaturated Fat: 3 g	Sodium: 32 mg
Cholesterol: 0 mg	Fiber: 2 g
Carbohydrates: 20 g	Protein: 2 g
Sugar: 13 g	

DIETARY EXCHANGES

1 1/2 Carbohydrate
1 Fat