

# Lifting Safely Stats and Facts

## FACTS

1. Strains and sprains from lifting loads improperly or from carrying loads that are either too large or too heavy are common hazards associated with manually moving materials.
2. When employees use smart lifting practices, they are less likely to suffer from back sprains, muscle pulls, wrist injuries, elbow injuries, spinal injuries, and other injuries caused by lifting heavy objects.
3. Force. Exerting too much force on your back – such as by lifting or moving heavy objects – can cause injury.
4. Repetition. Repeating certain movements, especially those that involve twisting or rotating your spine.
5. Inactivity. An inactive job or a desk job can contribute to back pain, especially if you have poor posture or sit all day in a chair with inadequate back support.
6. Start by eating a healthy diet. Make sure you get enough calcium and vitamin D. These nutrients can help prevent a condition that causes your bones to become weak and brittle (osteoporosis). Osteoporosis is responsible for many of the bone fractures that lead to back pain.
7. Combine aerobic exercise, such as swimming or walking, with exercises that strengthen and stretch your back muscles and abdomen.
8. For most healthy adults, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous aerobic activity – preferably spread throughout the week – and strength training exercises at least twice a week.
9. Smoking reduces blood flow to your lower spine, which can contribute to spinal disk degeneration and slow healing from back injuries.

# STATS

- Lifting heavy items is one of the leading causes of injury in the workplace. In 2001, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that over 36 percent of injuries involving missed workdays were the result of shoulder and back injuries.
- More than one million back injuries are sustained in the workplace annually.
- BLS ran a survey and discovered that 80% of these injuries were to the lower back and, unsurprisingly, 75% of these happened during lifting tasks.
- In 2016, musculoskeletal disorders involving the back accounted for 38.5% of all work-related musculoskeletal disorders.
- Nursing assistants take the most days off work as a result of a back injury.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), back injuries account for one of every five injuries and illnesses in the workplace. Eighty percent of these injuries occur to the lower back and are associated with manual materials handling tasks.
- Back pain is the third most common reason for visits to the doctor's office, behind skin disorders and osteoarthritis/joint disorders.