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According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one million workers suffer back injuries each year. In the US, back injuries account for nearly 20% of all injuries and illnesses in the workplace. The risk of injury is influenced by age, fitness level, and weight.

#### Knowing Your Back:

- x Your spine consists of 24 interlocking bones with flexible joints called vertebrae.
- x Shock absorbing discs lie in between each pair of vertebrae.
- x A healthy spine is arranged in three natural curves that form an S-shape.
- x These natural curves keep your body balanced and support you when you move.
- x The curves also distribute your weight evenly throughout your spine, making back injuries less likely.

#### Common Back Injury Causes

- x Trying to lift too much weight
- x Twisting & bending while lifting
- x Reaching & lifting
- x Carrying awkward objects
- x Working in awkward positions
- x Sitting or standing too long

#### Injury Prevention: Safe Lifting Techniques

- x Plant Your Feet Firmly- Get a Stable Base
- x Bend at Your Knees- Not Your Waist
- x Tighten Your Abdominal Muscles to Support Your Spine
- x Get a Good Grip- Use Both Hands
- x Keep the Load Close to Your Body
- x Use Your Leg Muscles As You Lift
- x Keep Your Back Upright, Keep It in Its Natural Posture
- x Lift Steadily and Smoothly Without Jerking
- x To put the item down, use the above directions in reverse.

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