



A Division of SPG  
Insurance Solutions, LLC

# THE DISPATCH

MANAGING RISK IN THE MOVING & STORAGE INDUSTRY

## AVOIDING BACK INJURIES AND BACK PAIN

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, back injuries account for one of every five on the job injuries. This figure is even higher for the moving industry. Eighty percent of these injuries occur to the lower back and are associated with manual lifting. Additionally, re-injury frequently results from a new incident (slips, twists, trips, etc.) because an injured back is weaker and prone to ongoing problems. By following the tips below, back pain and injuries can be reduced.

### TO AVOID INJURIES YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF THE LEADING RISK FACTORS:

1. Poor posture
2. Poor physical condition
3. Improper body mechanics
4. Jobs that require high energy

To reduce injuries, work on proper posture. This includes proper sitting position, lifting with a straight back, standing straight. Make sure that any equipment you use is adjusted for you; this includes desks, vehicles, or any other on the job tools. Place frequently used items or heavy items where they are easily accessible. Stretch often! This reduces muscle tightening and fatigue. Move often, even if you are sitting or standing; weight shifts can reduce stress on over worked muscles.

Try to keep yourself in reasonable shape; do not over stress your body if you are not used to difficult labor. Keep your stomach muscles firm, they are critical in reducing back pain and proper lifting techniques. Remember as you get older you will be able to lift less weight. At age 65 the average person's strength is only 75% of someone who is 25 years old.

Lift with common sense! Get help with heavy objects. A good estimate is avoid lifting objects that exceed 25% to 30% of your body weight. Can you slide or use a cart instead of lifting? Try to keep items in the safe lifting zone from your knees to your shoulders. Get a good solid foundation, wear comfortable shoes that provide support. Clear a pathway before lifting.

Managing back pain is your responsibility. By understanding your limitations, you have a better than average chance of reducing serious injury. Think before you lift and work smarter not harder. For additional information contact our claims department.