



Toolbox Talk: Proper Lifting

Introduction/Overview:

The importance of proper lifting techniques cannot be overstated. Each year employees, both on and off the job, injure themselves because of improper lifting techniques. This Toolbox Talk will explain how to lift correctly, so the next time you make a lift, you will significantly reduce your chance of an injury.

Statistics:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) [News Release dated November 10, 2016](#), under Table 4, BLS indicated that in 2018, [91,020](#) overexertion in lifting and lowering injuries occurred in the private sectors.

Talking Points:

The below talking points will cover [tips on how to lift correctly](#).

- Maintain a wide stance. Feet should be shoulder-width apart.
- If needed, bend the knees and squat with back straight.
- Look straight ahead, keep your back straight, chest out and shoulders back.
- Lift slowly by straightening your hips and knees using your legs, don't twist and keep your back straight.
- Keep the load close to your body at the belt or belly button.
- Take small steps and use your feet to change direction.
- Keep your shoulders and hips in line as you change direction. Remember, do not twist your waist.
- Use your legs and squat with the hips and knees.

Points to keep in mind:

- Ensure you have a good grip on the load. Use handles if available.
- Test the weight of the load before moving. Never lift more than you can easily lift.
- If a load is heavy, consider a team lift or use a mechanical lifting device.
- Never lift or remove a heavy load above your head.
- Never ascend or descend a ladder carrying a load.

Final Thoughts:

Keep in mind that overexertion in lifting or lowering injuries (improper lifting techniques) can and do negatively affect your health and safety. By following the above guidelines, you will be prepared to properly lift all loads.

NOTE: Always promote discussion with the attendees. If a question comes up that no one in attendance can answer, please contact OWC or the Loss Control Innovations consultants for assistance.

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References:

[Lifting or lowering injuries for 2015](#)

[How to correctly make a lift](#)