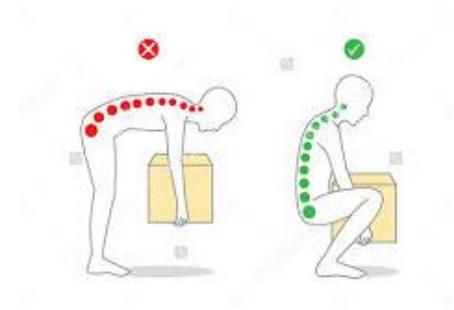


Safe Handling of Objects

- Avoid printing this document if possible
- **Please ensure you complete and sign the declaration form once completed**

Safe Handling of Objects

- Legislation
- Risk Management / Risk Control
- Back care / Posture / Biomechanics
- Principles of Safe Moving and Handling



Why do we have Manual Handling training?

Manual Handling is a key part of any working day for most employees. Manual handling injury also accounts for up to 40% of work related sickness absence within health and social care. Anyone involved in the moving and handling of goods / equipment could be at risk of sustaining injury through poor posture or inappropriate manual handling.

Relevant legislation around Manual Handling is:

The legislation is based on the notion that the prevention of accidents or injury depends on the understanding of the risk factors in a particular task. The law is there to support and protect individuals in the work place and to assist employers and employees to understand their responsibilities and operate safely.

Employer's responsibility

Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 - Section 2(2)

“Provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of his employees.”

NHS guidance states employers should:

- Avoid the need for hazardous manual handling, as far as is reasonably practicable
- Assess the risk of injury from any unavoidable hazardous manual handling
- Reduce risks to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable
- Ensure that assessments and action plans are written, and are available to all
- Develop, implement and communicate a policy and local codes of practice relating to manual handling in the workplace

- Employ a competent person such as a back care adviser
- Monitor policy and codes of practice, and take action if they are not properly applied

Employee's responsibility

“Carry out any duty as required by your Employer co-operating with systems and procedures to enable that duty to be performed safely and effectively.”

NHS guidance states employees should:

- Follow appropriate systems laid down for their safety
- Be aware of and understand their organisation's manual handling policy
- Make proper use of equipment provided for their safety
- Co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters
- Inform their employer if they identify hazardous handling activities or any dangerous defects in equipment
- Take care to ensure that their activities do not put others at risk

Employees are responsible for their own safety and for the safety of others when carrying out any manual handling tasks.

Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992) define manual handling as 'any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving) by hand or by bodily force.' Employees are encouraged to measure and control risks associated with any duty by utilising the T.I.L.E assessment approach (please refer to Risk Assessment for further information).

The Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations (1998)

Equipment used should be for its design and intended purpose. Employees should only use equipment that they have been trained to operate.

The Lifting Operating and Lifting Equipment Regulations (1998) –

All lifting and lowering equipment should be examined prior to its use and have a LOLER inspection carried out every six months.

Risk Management

‘A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. This also needs to be reviewed annually or as required.’ This assessment method is easily remembered by the acronym TILE. When assessing manual handling risks you need to look at four specific areas:

Task - does the activity involve twisting, stooping, bending, excessive travel, pushing, pulling or precise positioning of the load, sudden movement, inadequate rest or recovery periods, team handling or seated work?

Individual - does the individual require unusual strength or height for the activity, are they pregnant, disabled or suffering from a health problem. Is specialist knowledge or training required?

Load - is the load heavy, unwieldy, difficult to grasp, sharp, hot, cold, difficult to grip, are the contents likely to move or shift?

Environment - are there space constraints, uneven, slippery or unstable floors, variations in floor levels, extremely hot, cold or humid conditions, poor lighting, poor ventilation, gusty winds, clothing or Personal Protective Equipment that restricts movement?

Task – before you undertake any moving or handling task you should consider the work area and the work load you are to handle. You can do this by asking yourself the following questions:

- Why am I moving this load?
- What is the most effective/safest way of fulfilling the task?
- Can I avoid the move in some way?
- Is there an alternative?
- How often will I perform this task?
- Where am I going to and from?

Individual - It is important to consider both your own and others, if this is a team situation, physical attributes when thinking through the task. Do you or any other member of the team have any medical or physical characteristics / problems which would affect ability to carry out the task?

Previous injuries
Differences in height

Pregnancy
How tired are you? (tiredness can affect ability)

Load

You should make a personal assessment of the risk when moving and handling any type of load. You need to assess a number of factors including:

1. Is the load Heavy?
2. Is it bulky or unwieldy?
3. Will it be difficult to grasp?
4. Is it unstable or will it shift unpredictably?
5. Is it hot or cold?
6. Has it any sharp edges?
7. Will it be slippery?
8. What about the shape? - Will this present any difficulties?

Environment - it is very important that you recognise any hazards that the environment you are operating in has. You need to consider if there is a lack of space to manoeuvre or are the work surfaces too high or low meaning you will have to stretch or reach. Uneven or slippery floors are hazardous as are steps and inadequate lighting. Be mindful of any obstructions that may cause you to trip and fall. The environmental temperature could be a hazard in itself if it is too hot or cold

Back Care / Posture / Biomechanics

Musculo-skeletal disorders describe any injury, damage or disorder of the joints or other tissues in the upper/lower limbs or the back. Common activities that can cause Musculo-skeletal disorders include; holding a static posture, bending, and moving and handling activities on a regular basis particularly when they involve bending or twisting, lifting heavy loads and poor seating posture. Common injuries include:

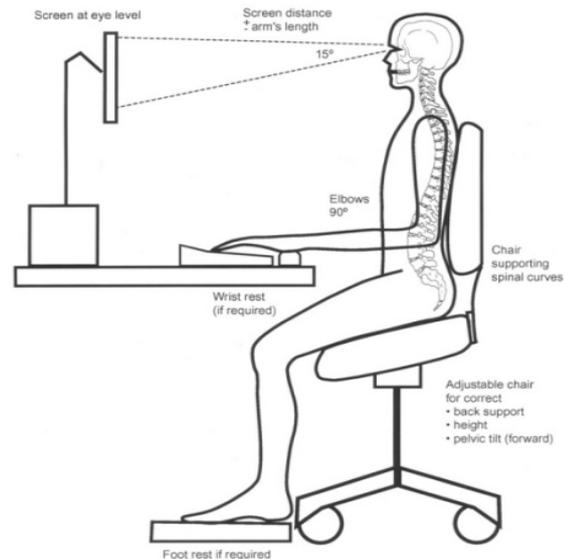
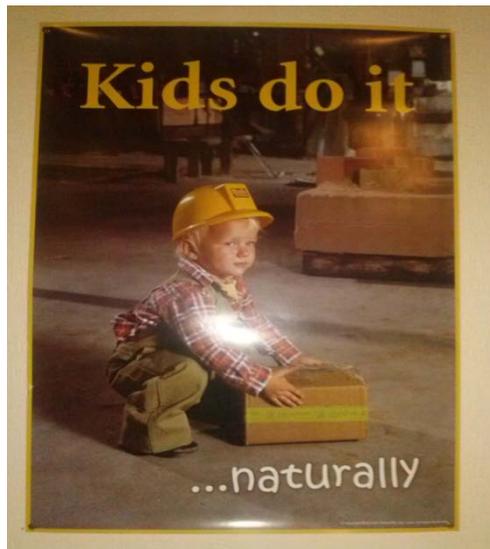
- Back injuries – trapped nerves, disc injury, strain
- Muscles and tendons – repetitive strain injury
- Ligaments – gristly straps which stretch between bones holding them together and mainly control the direction of motion and limit movement at the end of the normal range
- Tendons – the means by which the muscles are attached to the bones
- Muscles – found in pairs on either side of the spine and provide the main stability for the vertebral column



Ligaments, tendons and muscles can be injured as a result of twisting and stretching, particularly if carried out repetitively. These types of injuries are called soft tissue injuries and tend to be the cause of the majority of reported back injuries. Cumulative strain is when these injuries occur as a result of repetitively carrying out these activities – and is a loss of elasticity in muscle structures.

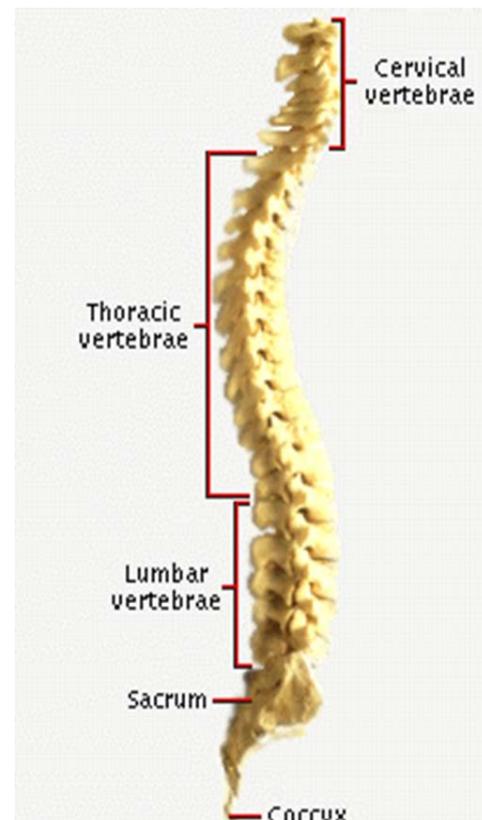
To prevent these common cumulative injuries, there are a number of things that can be done to promote healthy back care:

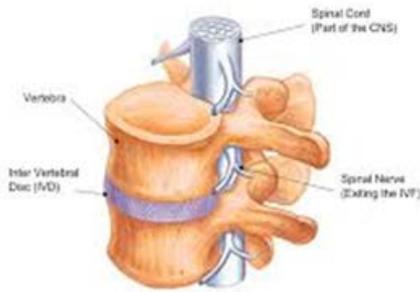
- Always ensure a good posture – keeping the spinal column in a natural 's' shape
- Mimicking natural patterns of movement – soften the knees rather than stooping from the back, ensure correct seating posture at workstation
- Try to use a chair with a backrest (*Change how you sit every few minutes*)



The back is particularly vulnerable to injury. Its main components are:

- The spinal cord which is a thick cord of nerve tissue enclosed by the spine this together with the brain forms the central nervous system
- The vertebrae are the bones which act as the building blocks of the spine. They can be damaged by impact injury as with any other bone
 - 7 Cervical (neck) vertebrae (c1 – c7)
 - 12 thoracic (upper back) vertebrae, each connected by ligaments to a pair of ribs (T1 – T12)
 - 5 lumbar (lower back) vertebrae, which are the largest and strongest (L1 – L5)
 - 5 sacral vertebrae which are fused together to form the sacrum which is connected by ligaments to the pelvis
 - 4 coccyx vertebrae also fused together.



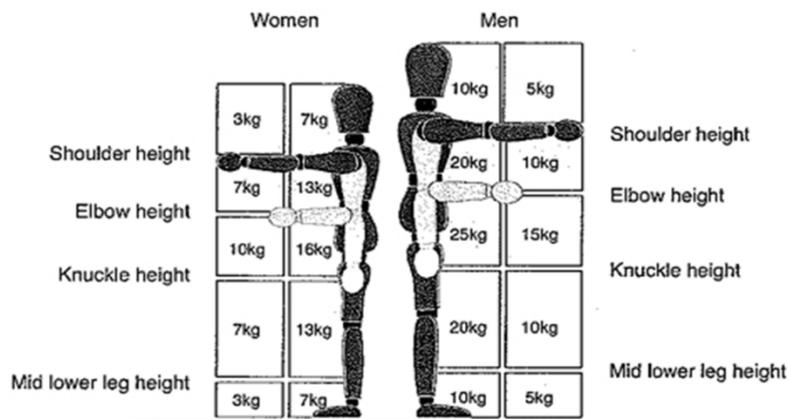


The intervertebral discs are kind of shock absorbers – they are soft fibrous discs with a jelly like centre and are positioned between the vertebrae. They allow the spine to move by cushioning movements between the vertebrae.

Back injuries at work can be prevented by understanding what causes them and taking preventative measures to reduce risk when moving and handling loads.

Back Care – HSE Guidance

The diagram below is to act as a guideline for men or women who are transporting a load whilst holding the load in the position against the body. An individual's capabilities will affect how much they are able to handle, therefore these guidelines should act as a maximum figure.



Principles of Safe Moving and Handling

- Dynamic stable base
- Flexed hips and knees
- Maintain natural curves of the spine ('s' shape)
- Close to the load (Elbows close to your body)
- Secure hold / grip
- Use of command / action terminology (Ready, Steady,

Questions:

What assessment tool should be followed by all individuals for any manual handling tasks that they have to undertake?

Name three ways an individual can promote healthy back care?

1.

2.

3.

In relation to legislation what is your responsibility as an employee?

You have now completed the Workbook

Please complete and sign the workbook declaration sheet to confirm you have read and understood – Safe Handling of Objects workbook.

This must be submitted to: Training.dept2@anhst.nhs.uk