

Safe Lifting



Toolbox Talk #10

Lifting activities are in the top 5 causes for injuries at WMU. Back, shoulder, and joint injuries are common when lifting improperly or attempting to lift objects heavier than someone can manage. Today we will discuss proper lifting techniques and tips so we can reduce the risk of these preventable injuries.

Prepare:

- Perform a few simple stretches before you attempt to lift or move a heavy object
- Have materials delivered or moved as close to your final destination as possible before lifting
- Assess the object you are lifting
 - Potential weight of object
 - Best gripping points for object
- Ensure your travel path is free of hazards

Get Help if Possible:

- Use carts, dollies, hoists etc. to move materials
- When lifting a load more than 50 lbs., get help from another worker
- Use carrying tools with handles to carry odd shaped loads

Proper Lifting Technique:

- Have your feet spread about a shoulder's width apart
- Your feet should be close to the object
- Get a firm grip on the object
- Keep your back straight and your elbows close to your body
- Keeping your back straight and head up, straighten your legs to lift the object
- At the same time, tighten our stomach muscles to provide back support (Don't hold your breath)
- While carrying, do NOT twist or bend at the waist, move your feet and legs when turning
- Keep the load as close to your body as possible
- Repeat these steps to safely set the object down



[Click here for a safe lifting video!](#)

Other Helpful Hints:

- Take your time! Lifting is not a race, and can cause serious injury when rushed
- Lift the object as smoothly as possible, avoid "jerking" when lifting
- Know your own strengths and limitations. Don't attempt a heavy lift by yourself if you are not capable. Don't be afraid to ask for help!