

# TOOL BOX TALKS

## Construction Safe Lifting

Construction is rough and nobody argues with that. Everything is heavy by the end of the day. But what are the reasons we in the construction business injure our backs? How do we pull or strain the ligaments and tendons that support the spine? How are the discs of the spine bulged, slipped or herniated? Simply, we abuse our spine. Sure – we lift heavy things, but when does it become abuse? Let's brainstorm some ideas for safe lifting on the construction jobsite.

### WORKSAFE TIPS

#### HOW WE INJURE OUR SPINE:

1. Repetitive lifting, over and over.
2. Twisting while lifting, instead of turning on our feet.
3. Falling while carrying a load.
4. Slipping while carrying a load.
5. Losing grip, causing the load to shift.
6. Carrying bulky objects, with arms outstretched.
7. Carrying objects that are too heavy.
8. Uneven walking surfaces.
9. Climbing stairs while carrying objects.
10. Using the spine to do the lifting instead of our legs.

#### INJURIES OCCUR OVER TIME.

Ever heard of a coworker that – literally – bent over to pick up a screwdriver and hurt their back? Seriously – did reaching over and picking up the screwdriver do it or did they have a pre-existing injury that just showed up? Think about it.

#### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Break down loads. Break a case of 6 down to two loads of three. Don't carry entire bundles – break them down.
2. Use a machine – what machines on the jobsite can do the lifting for you? Skid steer, loader, pickup truck, dolly.
3. Use extension cords and longer air hoses, and leave generators, welders and compressors in the truck.
4. Use wagons, dollies to move tool boxes, supplies, crates.
5. Team lift – ask a coworker to share the load.
6. When getting supplies delivered, get them unloaded as close as possible to where they're needed.
7. Pick up trip hazards on stairs, walkways and use gravel to make ramps over footings or concrete pad edges.
8. Wear proper footwear for the jobsite – no tennis shoes.
9. THINK ABOUT THE LIFT – DON'T HURT YOURSELF!

MAKE MACHINES DO THE WORK!

DON'T TREAT YOUR SPINE LIKE A MACHINE!



USE CARTS, DOLLIES TO DO THE LIFTING. TAKE THE LOAD OFF OF YOUR SPINE!



COMPRESSORS, JOB BOXES – THEY ARE TOO HEAVY FOR ONE PERSON TO LIFT!





**Smart, Accident-Free Environments**

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