



# BACK SAFETY

HOW TO KEEP SAFE AND PAIN-FREE



# INTRODUCTION

## OBJECTIVE

To outline the proper lifting procedure for heavy objects, and highlight some tips to help in preventing back injury.

## KEY MESSAGES:

- To understand how to properly lift heavy objects in the kitchen environment
- To illustrate tips for avoiding back injury



# WHY IS BACK SAFETY SO IMPORTANT IN THE KITCHEN?

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), back disorders are one of the leading causes of disability in the nation's workforce. As the average age of those working increases, the frequency of back disorders and injuries is expected to increase.



When working in the kitchen, your back can be your most important muscle. A needless injury can shorten your career and even cause lifelong pain.





# HOW TO PROPERLY LIFT A HEAVY OBJECT

## 1. Get as close to the object as possible

Keeping the object close to your body's center line will reduce back strain

## 2. Bend your knees with a neutral back posture

This ensures that your largest muscle group, your legs, is taking the brunt of the effort for the lift – and not your back

## 3. Pivot with your feet; do not twist your back

Twisting can cause strain on the discs and vertebrae of your back

## 4. Keep the object close to your body

Also, tightening your abdominal muscles will aid in keeping your spine straight

## 5. Transfer the object to a shelf that is between your waist and shoulders





# LIFTING TIPS

- Store heavy items no higher than waist-high
- Take out trash bags before they become too full/heavy
- Use a dolly or cart whenever transporting an item from one location to another
- Do not be shy; ask for help from another associate when lifting a heavy item
- When carrying an object in one hand, try putting your free hand on your thigh. This will help in maintaining correct back posture
- Stay in good physical condition and stretch before starting your shift



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ A healthy back is one of the most important muscles for any person, especially a foodservice worker
- ✓ Follow proper lifting procedures to ensure you stay safe at work
- ✓ Ask for help when lifting heavy objects. Do not ever twist your back when picking up an item, or when placing it on its desired location

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## REFERENCES

<https://www.osha.gov/otm/section-7-ergonomics/chapter-1>

<https://www.safetymanualosha.com/back-injury-prevention-tips/>

[https://www.osha.gov/dte/grant\\_materials/fy10/sh-20865-10/07\\_ergo.ppt](https://www.osha.gov/dte/grant_materials/fy10/sh-20865-10/07_ergo.ppt)

# BACK SAFETY POST-TEST

1. Which of the following is not one of the steps to proper lifting of a heavy object?

Get as close to the object as possible.

Keep the object close to your body when lifting.

You should place the object above your shoulders.

All the above

2. You should always twist your back when lifting or placing an object.

True

False

3. Only ask for help in lifting an object you cannot lift on your own.

True

False