Topic: Food Service – Manual Material Handling

# Accidents involving manual material handling tasks such as lifting are some of the most common causes of injuries in the workplace. It might seem simple, but taking a moment to assess and plan before engaging in these tasks can reduce the potential for injury.

# General Safety Tips

* Assess the weight of the object before attempting to move it
* Create a clear pathway before starting the task
* Use a balanced stance; for example, with feet a shoulder width apart
* Keep lower back in its natural/neutral position
* Maintain a secure grip on the item
* Lift with the legs and stand up in a smooth, even motion
* Bend at the knees and hips before the lift begins
* If an even and smooth lift can’t occur, stop and consider an alternative method
* Never twist and lift, which can put additional stress on the back
* Pivot feet when changing directions
* Position feet in the direction of the transfer and pivot your body
* Store heavy, bulky materials on mid-level shelves, preferably on shelves near waist height
* Use a cart, dolly or load lifter for assistance moving objects – boxes, crates, barrels, etc.
* Conduct a two-person lift for heavy items that can’t be moved alone with a cart/dolly
* When standing for long periods, use anti-fatigue mats to reduce stress on backs and legs

# Topics to Discuss

* Available equipment
* Identify potential ergonomic stressors
* Procedures to follow if a lifting injury occurs
* Maintenance schedules for moving objects such as tables, equipment, etc.

# Resources

For more information about this topic, visit:

* [Restaurant Safety: Strain and Sprain Prevention](https://www.compwestinsurance.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/19801-Restaurant-Safety-UPDATED-17381.pdf)
* [Reducing Manual Material Handling Injuries in the Workplace](https://www.compwestinsurance.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/21600-CW-Handout-Reducing-Manual-Material-Handling-Injuries.pdf)
* Lifting Techniques: [English](https://www.afgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/AFG-SafeLifting-Poster.pdf) | [Spanish](https://www.afgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/AFG-SafeLifting-Poster_ES.pdf) | [Vietnamese](https://www.compwestinsurance.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LIfting-Technique-Poster-Vietnamese.pdf) | [Pumjabi](https://www.compwestinsurance.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Lifting-Poster-PJ-1.pdf)
* [OSHA.gov](https://www.osha.gov/ergonomics)/ergonomics

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|  **Date:**  |  |
|  **Location:**  |  |
|  **Meeting Organizer:**  |  |

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| **Problem Areas or Concerns:** |
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| **Attendees (Names/Signatures):** |
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| **Comments:** |