



# On-Site Insights

Leading your company and your employees to a life well lived

**On-Site Solutions**<sup>SM</sup>  
PHYSICAL THERAPY  
Injury Prevention & On-Site Physical Therapy Treatment

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## Back Health – What to do at work

Last month's tips on "the right fuel", moving frequently and the other *Circulation* information all apply to your workplace too. There are other considerations that are prevalent in the work setting, though also present in home tasks; the remaining two goals are Preparation and Balance.

### PREPARATION:

#### Body Mechanics:

Keep curves in spine when Lifting OR bending. That means Bending at the hips and knees instead of from the spine.



Get as close to load as possible:

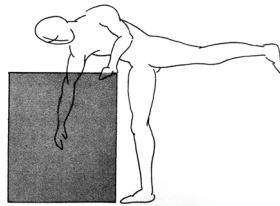
Batting zone: between your knees and your shoulders and directly in front of you is the ideal zone for items you lift, especially heavy or repetitive objects.

Bend knees to lower yourself to items on the floor

Pivot feet when moving an object sideways instead of twisting spine

When pulling or lifting an object beyond arm's length try:

Bridging with hand(s) when possible – place at least one hand on a solid surface to reach forward with other hand for object or when having to lean forward for awhile.



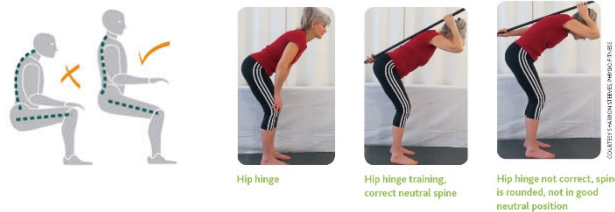
**Golfer's lift** - by raising one leg behind, you extend the reach by a few inches and help keep the curve in your low back. Just remember to hold in your abs!

**Ergonomic tools:** Perhaps it's obvious, but tools designed to lessen your work load usually help save your back. Use lumbar pillows for long drives, take the time to use hand carts, truck gate lifts, the help of a coworker (just don't call him a Tool!) when loads are heavy or repetitive.

**Be Strong:** Having a strong CORE is essential. The muscles between chin and tailbone all help support spine health if strong. Weak muscles are like a weak army. Strengthening your abdominals, back muscles, pelvic floor and neck at least twice a week is crucial.



**BALANCE:** Evening out the use of right and left sides of the body prevents overuse strains of your back. Carry items in both hands, or switch between left and right. Avoid bending to the side to pick up an item on the ground with one hand. Front and back use of the body is affected by alignment – **POSTURE**. When needing to sit or stand for long periods, stack your spine with its "neutral" curves.



Supports, like cervical collars, wrist or back braces, are only advised in the first days after an injury. The evidence is overwhelming that wearing such devices at work not only does NOT prevent injury but instead adds risk by promoting weakness and careless movements. Even during injury recovery, find out from your doc or physical therapist when you should remove such supports, so that circulation can occur for healing - remember MOTION IS LOTION!

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E-mail us at: [mjill@onsitesolutionspt.com](mailto:mjill@onsitesolutionspt.com) for more information or to discuss our injury prevention programs.

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