



## BACK CARE

### CHANGE YOUR HABITS

- Place objects often used within arm's reach, between knuckle and shoulder height. Avoid reaching across an extended space, and modify work habits that result in unnecessary motions. When reaching overhead, avoid stretching or over-reaching.
- When talking on the phone, use a speakerphone, headset, or shoulder rest, or rearrange your writing position to free one hand. Cradling a telephone receiver between your ear and shoulder causes neck and upper back strain.
- When carrying luggage, shoulder bags, or briefcases, balance the load equally, shift the weight from one side to the other or use a luggage carrier. Heavy shoulder bags and briefcases throw your body off balance. Try lightening your load by carrying only frequently used items.
- Avoid awkward or unbalanced postures, such as standing with all your weight on one leg, sitting with your weight shifted to one side, or crossing your legs at the knees while sitting. Do not slouch!
- Avoid carrying heavy objects, and be sure to get help if the load is too heavy, or too awkward to handle. Use a dolly or hand truck.
- Make sure your mattress provides adequate support. A soft, sagging mattress or a mattress that is too hard does not support the natural curves of the body and may cause back discomfort.
- Know your physical ability and limitations.
- Always get as close as possible to the person or piece of equipment that you are going to lift.
- Keep your arms and the weight you are lifting close to your body to create leverage and help maintain your balance.
- Lift without twisting. Avoid any kind of twisting or swinging motions when lifting.
- Position your feet shoulder's width apart with one foot slightly in front of the other. Do not minimize the importance of proper footwear.
- Communicate clearly and frequently with your partner. Tell the victim what you are going to do before you do it.
- Ensure that enough help is available. Use an even number of people to maintain balance during the lift.
- Use a power grip to get maximum force from the hands. The hands should be positioned a minimum of 10 inches apart. The palms should face up with palms and fingers in complete contact with the lifting apparatus.
- **AVOID BENDING AT THE WAIST.**