



GO Ergo!

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Shovel and Toss Without Injury!

Overexerting yourself while shoveling is not only bad for your heart, it's bad for your back too. Avoid injuries with these healthy tips:

- ❖ Warm up your muscles before shoveling tasks by walking around for a few minutes or marching in place. Then stretch your arms and legs to allow muscles to work more efficiently.
- ❖ Use the correct shovel for the task at hand. A smaller blade will allow you to lift a smaller load, but there will be less strain on your body.
- ❖ Stand with your feet at hip-width apart to maintain your balance while keeping the shovel close to your body. Then, bend at the knees, not your back, and tighten your core abdominal muscles as you lift the load on the shovel.
- ❖ If you need to move a load to one side of your body, re-position your feet to face the direction in which the load is going.
- ❖ Use a D-grip handle to provide a hand placement position that is more angled to the mounting surface.
- ❖ Listen to your body. If you start to feel sore, stop what you are doing and alert your supervisor.

Use a Lift Assist to Avoid Injuries

Doing some heavy lifting? Don't be afraid to reach for assistance — a lift assist, that is! Here are some useful lifting devices and when to use them: To raise heavier loads, use a scissor load or pneumatic lifter.

- Use a turntable to position the loads closer to your body.
- To raise or lower yourself or the load, and to access it more easily, use:
 - A step stool
 - Catwalks or platforms
 - Powered stackers
 - A stationary or mobile scissors lift
- Consider stacking pallets to create a higher work surface.



Light vs. Heavy...Are You Ready?

There are no universal rules for lifting loads, especially since they do not all weigh the same amount. Yet, here are a few pointers for handling a load safely in general:

- If you are picking up a light load:
 - Lean over the object while slightly bending with one knee and extending the other leg behind your body.
 - Hold onto a sturdy object, such as a table, for support as you reach down to pick up the object.
- If you are picking up a heavy load:
 - Get extremely close to the load and bend at your knees. Then, lift the load with your leg muscles.

Got 5 Minutes? Do Some Stretching!

Stretching your muscles before a hard day's work will help to keep you pain-free after your shift and prevent injuries. Consider doing these quick but effective back, neck and shoulder stretches before you begin your daily tasks:

- Stand and stretch your arms to the ceiling and breathe deeply for five seconds. Do this several times.
- Inhale and shrug your shoulders to your ears. Hold this motion for five seconds and release. Repeat several times.
- Grab your right elbow with your left hand and stretch your arm across your chest. Hold this position for five seconds and then switch to the other arm.
- Stretch your arms around the opposite shoulder blade and give yourself a bear hug.
- Hug your legs with your arms while sitting, allowing your chest to rest on your legs.



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