

Tips for Lifting and Bending

Anyone who engages in heavy lifting should take precautions when lifting and bending.

- If an object is too heavy or awkward, get help.
- Spread your feet apart to give yourself a wide base of support.
- Stand as close as possible to the object being lifted.
- Bend at the knees, not at the waist. As you move up and down, tighten stomach muscles and tuck buttocks in so that the pelvis is rolled under and the spine remains in a natural "S" curve. (Even when not lifting an object, always try to use this posture when stooping down.)
- Hold objects close to the body to reduce the load on the back.
- Lift using the leg muscles, not those in the back.
- Stand up without bending forward from the waist.
- Never twist from the waist while bending or lifting any heavy object. If you need to move an object to one side, point your toes in that direction and pivot toward it. Better yet, lift your feet to move as you turn instead of twisting while you lift.
- If an object can be moved without lifting, pull it, don't push.

Reference: Harvey Simon, MD, Editor-in-Chief, Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Physician, Massachusetts General Hospital. Also reviewed by David Zieve, MD, MHA, Medical Director, A.D.A.M., Inc.

- Ask Dr Cromwell for the Water Buffalo Lecture (only 3 minutes). It's the best way to remember all the above points.

Disclaimer: This information is not intended as a substitute for medical or chiropractic professional help or advice, but is to be used only as an aide in understanding spinal and nerve issues.

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