

PREVENTING BACK PAIN IN THE WORKPLACE

As a large proportion of life is spent at work, the tips below are to help you move well, stay well and assist in preventing back pain in the workplace.

LIFTING

- Prior to any lift, ask yourself if there is an easier way to do this. Could I use a crane, forklift, wheelbarrow or other device to do the hard work for me?
- For those heavy lifts, asking for help doesn't make you less of a tradie.
- Do a quick safety check of the area and what you plan to lift.
- Prepare your body by warming up BEFORE you lift and carry.
- If you do have to lift, then use a sound lifting technique with your feet comfortably apart and in a stable position. Lift using hips and knees, not your back.
- Maintain the natural curve of your back.
- Avoid twisting–turn by using your feet, not your back.

STANDING POSTURE

- Think tall, chest lifted, shoulders relaxed, chin tucked in and head level.
- Posture should be stable, balanced and relaxed.

SITTING

- Don't stay seated for too long.
- Regularly stand up, stretch and walk around.
- If you work in an office ensure that your workstation and computer are correctly positioned.

DRIVING

- Adjust your seat to sit comfortably. Adjust the lumbar support if available.
- Take regular breaks on long journeys.
- Don't sit with your wallet in your back pocket.
- Be careful what you do after a long journey, take a few seconds to straighten up before lifting things out of the car.

FOOTWEAR

- With every step, shock is absorbed by the feet, knees, hips and spine to decrease the force of impact. Wearing the correct footwear helps reduce these forces further whilst not affecting the normal function of the foot.

EXERCISE

- Simple exercise such as walking or swimming is the best.
- Before and after exercise, make sure you warm up and cool down with gentle stretches.

GENERAL

- If your back hurts, don't ignore the pain! See a physiotherapist.



HOW CAN PHYSIOTHERAPY HELP?

Physiotherapists are experts in human movement. They understand how your muscles, bones, joints and ligaments work and how injuries happen. Physiotherapists are able to help get you back to work faster.

Physiotherapists can:

- Assess your muscle strength, flexibility and fitness to design an appropriate fitness program.
- Teach you how to better handle loads, to move more efficiently and safely.
- Teach you how to engage your trunk core stabilisers when performing a task.
- Show you how to prevent injury in your home or workplace.
- Treat muscle, joint and ligament injuries to assist with a successful recovery.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO
WWW.TRADIESHEALTH.COM.AU
AND SEE THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE.**

