

BACK SAFETY PLAN



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Purpose

Uchiyama MFG America LLC requires the procedures in this plan to be followed to provide a safe working environment at all times. UMA implemented these procedures on safe lifting practices to ensure that employees understand how to protect themselves from the hazards of improper lifting practices. It is the responsibility of all employees to follow safe work practices and comply with these rules regarding work practices. The effectiveness of the back-safety plan depends upon the active support and involvement of all affected employees.

Back disorders can develop gradually or can be the result of a single traumatic event. Sprains and strains are the most common causes of lower back pain. Improper lifting or lifting loads that are too heavy for the back to support, falling, or sports activities are a few examples of back injury causes. Of these, lifting improperly or lifting loads that are too heavy for the back to support is the largest single cause of back pain and injury. Instituting proper lifting techniques and other safety measures can significantly reduce back injuries.

Frequency and Costs of Back Injuries

Back pain is one of the most predominant injuries across all industries and everyone is at risk. Not only are back injuries prevalent but they're expensive too. The average cost of a claim for a lower back injury is over \$38,000. Back injuries can be a major burden to employers, even when workers get hurt off the job. That's because when back pain forces employees to take time off there is a noticeable decline in quality, productivity and morale—and the costs can add up. Unplanned absences lead to:

- replacement workers who are 30% less productive than the person they're replacing
- increased workload
- higher stress levels
- disruptions to other employees' work

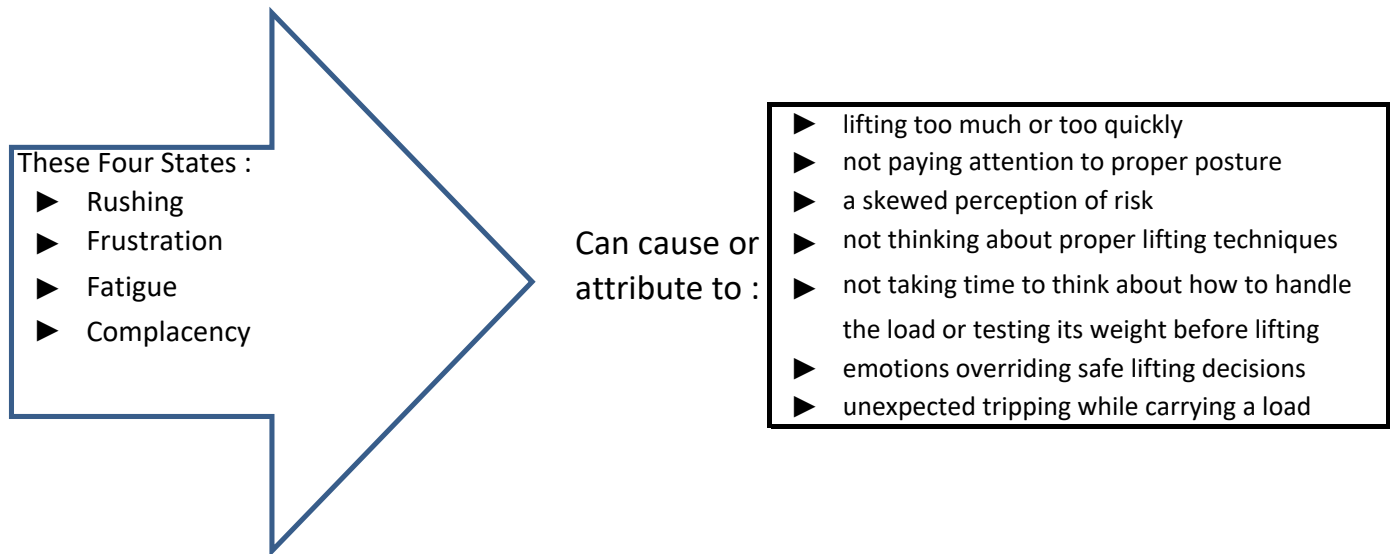
Safe Lifting Techniques

The basics of good lifting are:

1. Size up the load before you lift. Test by lifting one of the corners or pushing. If it's heavy or feels too awkward, get a mechanical aid or help from another worker. When in doubt, do not lift alone.
2. **Bend the knees**. This is the single most important aspect of lifting.
3. When performing the lift:
 - Place your feet close to the object and center yourself over the load.
 - Get a good hand hold.
 - Lift straight up, smoothly and let your legs do the work, not your back.
 - Avoid overreaching or stretching to pick up or set down a load.
4. Do not twist or turn your body once you have made the lift.
5. Make sure beforehand you have a clear path to carry the load.
6. Set the load down properly.
7. Always push, not pull, the object when possible.
8. Change the lifting situation if possible to minimize a lifting hazard:
 - ▶ If it's a long load, get some help.
 - ▶ Split the load into several smaller ones, when you can, to achieve manageable lifting weight.
 - ▶ Avoiding lifts from below the knees or above the shoulders by using mechanical aids, positioning yourself so that the object to move is within an acceptable lifting range (between the shoulders and knees), and/or getting help from your coworkers.

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The Four States That Affect Back Injuries



Alternative Materials-Handling Techniques

Alternative materials-handling techniques for carrying or moving loads are to be used whenever possible to minimize lifting and bending requirements. These alternative materials-handling techniques include use of-

- ▶ Hoists
- ▶ Forklifts
- ▶ Dollies
- ▶ Carts, and/or
- ▶ Other mechanical devices

Lifting aids are meant to help reduce employees' cumulative lifting loads. However, it's impossible to eliminate lifting loads entirely.

Other Factors

Factors unrelated to work that can affect back safety, including such things as physical condition and posture, athletic or home-improvement activity, and tension and stress.

Posture - Whether you're standing, sitting, or reclining, posture affects the amount of strain put on your back. The wrong posture increases strain on the back muscles and may bend the spine into positions that will cause trouble. When standing correctly, the spine has a natural "S" curve. The shoulders are back and the "S" curve is directly over the pelvis.

Stress - Stress is another factor that may lead to back pain. Tied in with your general physical condition, stress created from work or play can cause muscle spasms that affect the spinal nerve network. Although stress is part of everyone's life, and a certain amount of stress is normal, excessive stress causes backache. The solution is a balanced life style with time to relax.

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Repetitive Trauma - People often think back injuries result from lifting heavy or awkward objects. Many back injuries, however, do not come from a single lift, but occur from relatively minor strains over time.

Expectations & Responsibilities

UMA expects all employees to adhere to these guidelines of proper safe lifting techniques and understand each individual's limitations. Back safety awareness is extremely important due to the prevalence and potential severity of back injuries. This plan is a key document for assisting in increasing employee awareness of the importance of back safety. UMA is dedicated to protecting its employees from on-the-job injuries. All employees of UMA have the responsibility to work safely on the job by following this and all company policies and procedures when lifting or handling materials.

Supervisor Responsibilities are (but not limited to):

- ▶ Identify job duties that include heavy lifting.
- ▶ Instill general safety awareness as it relates to back safety.
- ▶ Identify and eliminate, when possible, job hazards.
- ▶ Train new employees, whose job responsibilities include lifting, on proper lifting techniques.
- ▶ Encourage 100% participation of daily stretching at the beginning of each shift with additional stretching after breaks and lunch.

Employees Responsibilities are (but not limited to):

- ▶ Comply with the Back-Safety Plan procedures.
- ▶ Ask for help in lifting or pushing heavy items.
- ▶ Report any accident or injury to the supervisor.
- ▶ Immediately report unsafe conditions, equipment, or observed practices to the supervisor.
- ▶ Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), as required.
- ▶ Use alternative materials handling equipment, as needed.
- ▶ Keep the body healthy
- ▶ Participate in daily stretching at the beginning of shift, after breaks and lunch, considering the limitations of their own body. (ie one that has knee problems may not want to participate in squat and reach stretching, though should participate in upper body stretching.)

Training

Back Safety is trained annually during the month the employee was hired.

Additional Information

The Projects, Environmental Safety Manager is responsible for the implementation and management of UMA's Back Safety Plan. The plan will be maintained, reviewed, and updated at least annually and whenever necessary to reflect new or modified procedures that affect issues related to back safety and lifting procedures that affect issues related to back safety and lifting procedures within UMA.