MMH – General Practice – Fact Sheet



WHAT TYPES OF PROTECTIVE CLOTHING SHOULD BE WORN?

DO WEAR

- Lightweight, flexible, tear and puncture-resistant clothing.
- Safety boots with toe caps and slip-resistant soles.
- Protective gloves, appropriate for the materials being handled.

DO NOT WEAR

- Clothing that may interfere or ‘snag’ on the object you are lifting, such as aprons, coats or clothing with exposed buttons, zippers or loose flaps.
- Heavy duty mitts that limit your grasp.

What should you do before lifting?

- Always check before lifting to see if mechanical aids such as hoists, lift trucks dollies or wheelbarrows are available.
- Get help with heavy or awkward loads.
- Assess and identify the weight of the load.
- Be sure that you can lift the load without over-exertion.
- Be sure that the load is “free” to move.
- Check that the contents of the load are stable and balanced. Repack items so the contents will not shift, where possible.
- Check that the planned location of the load is free of obstacles and debris.
- Be sure that the path to the planned location of the load is clear. Grease, oil, water, litter and debris can cause slips and falls.
- Particular handling and lifting techniques are needed for different kinds of loads or materials being handled (for example, compact loads, small bags, large sacks, drums and barrels, cylinders, sheet materials like metal or glass).
- Do not lift if you are not sure that you can handle the load safely.

What are some general tips for lifting?

- Prepare for the lift by warming up the muscles.
- Stand close to the load and face the way you intend to move.
- Use a wide stance to gain balance.

- Be sure you have a good grip on the load.
- Keep arms straight.
- Tighten abdominal muscles.
- Tuck chin into the chest.
- Initiate the lift with body weight.
- Lift the load as close to and as centred to the body as possible.
- Lift smoothly without jerking.
- Avoid twisting and side bending while lifting.
- Avoid carrying loads with only one hand.

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