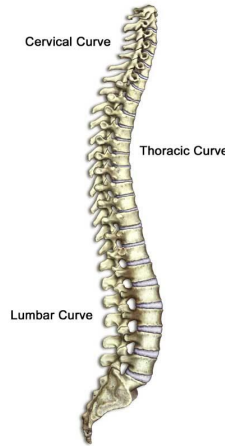


# Lifting Advice



## Your Spine

Your spine is made up of 24 moveable bones (vertebrae) that sit on your sacrum (tailbone). Muscles move the bones, and therefore your body. Ligaments prevent excessive movement of the bones. Movement of your spine relies on the interaction of all these parts, co-ordinated by the nerve system.

## ACC Statistics

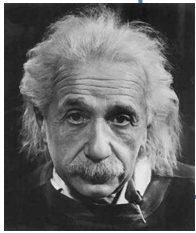
25% of all NZ work-related claims are for back injuries. Back injuries account for 35% of total work related ACC costs.



## Work smarter, not harder

Many low back injuries can be avoided if you:

1. Take the time to properly plan your lift or activity
2. Use equipment to do or assist with the lifting
3. Modify the load (make it smaller, or easier to carry)
4. Avoid prolonged periods of heavy labour
5. Stretch before and after any manual labour



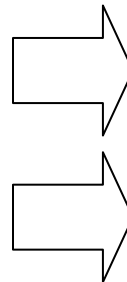
## Sustained or awkward

**postures** involve static muscle work, where your muscles are contracting but not relaxing so they are not easily able to drain the byproducts of working (eg. lactic acid). To ensure the long term health of your muscles and joints, minimize the time you spend in any posture, set up your task or workplace correctly and ensure you do stretches through your day.

## Low Back Injuries

Injuries to the low back can be caused by:

1. Sustained or awkward postures and movements
2. **Manual handling** (lifting) & application of high force
3. Slips, trips, falls and loss of balance
4. Other trauma, eg. motor vehicle accidents
5. Exposure to whole body vibration



*“Don't use your back like a crane!”*



## Correct Lifting Technique

1. Stretch before and after any lift
2. Ensure a stable, wide stance
3. Keep your trunk straight and as vertical as possible
4. Bend your knees to fully engage your leg muscles
5. Keep objects as close to your body as possible
6. Limit twisting or bending to the side

## Maintain Flexibility and Stability of your Spine

The best ways to keep your back in good shape are to:

1. Keep fit (at a gym or through sport)
2. Stretch at home and at work (PTO)
3. Develop your core stability (using pilates, yoga or swiss ball)
4. Address functional problems in your spine by seeing your local chiropractor

