

Back Injury Awareness and Prevention Assessment Form

Name: _____ Job title: _____

Agency and Work Location or Department: _____

Have you or any of your co-workers recently sustained a back injury? Yes No

If yes, please describe:



Does your job place you at risk?

- Do you frequently lift or carry heavy objects (25+ lbs) or people?
- Do you push, pull or carry people, objects, tools or equipment?
- Do you bend, twist or contort yourself routinely to complete job tasks?
- Do you sit, bend or stoop for extended periods of time?
- Do you suddenly bear the weight of patients, materials or equipment?
- Do you get struck by or equipment, materials or other external forces?
- Do you perform tasks on uneven or slippery surfaces?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you are at risk for a back injury.

Who else at your workplace do you feel MAY be at risk for back injuries? List all job titles or departments that you believe are at risk:

Now that you know who is at risk, the next step is to identify what specific risk factors you are exposed to.

What factors or situations put you at risk?

<i>Check the first column if you are exposed to the risk factors listed below; record how frequently you are exposed to that risk factor in the column on the right (H = Hourly, D = Daily, W = Weekly, M= Monthly, O= Occasionally)</i>	Y / N	Frequency
Lift heavy objects without mechanical equipment.		
The design of the workstation or area causes you to bend or twist while lifting.		
Lift loads off the floor or from low shelves.		
Lift loads above your head.		
Move loads over long or extended pathways.		
Lift or carry objects with your hands extended away from your body.		
Repeatedly lift and move objects.		
Lift or move objects that are difficult to hold onto.		
Push or pull heavy carts or equipment over long or extended pathways.		
Push or pull objects over uneven or rough surfaces.		
Push or pull objects up or down inclined or declining surfaces.		
Bend or twist around pipes, railings or other objects to complete tasks that require force (exercising a valve or repositioning a patient).		
Reach over or across something to apply force.		
Sit prolonged without adequate lumbar support.		
Sit and operate heavy equipment for extended periods of time.		
Bend over for extend periods of time to complete tasks.		
Twist or be placed in an awkward posture for extended time.		
Conduct repetitive tasks while bent or twisted for extended time.		
Manually hold up or support patients, equipment or materials.		
Escort or support patients/others who are apt to fall.		
Attacked by a patient or client.		
Work on slippery surfaces.		
Lift, carry, push or pull objects while on poor footing.		
Supporting something where the entire load could be quickly placed on you.		
Other:		

Now that you have identified all the risk factors, the next step is to determine which ones should be addressed first.

Frequently, our jobs expose us to many situations that can result in a back injury. The presence of these “risk factors” greatly influences the probability of a back injury. *Not all risk factors are equal. High-risk tasks include manually lifting very heavy objects or repetitive motion.*)

Prioritize the risk factors from the previous page. Select the most severe or most frequent risk factors and rank them in order.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Don't forget to address all the risk factors that you identified; sometimes the less obvious risk factors can cause the biggest problems!

Now that you have prioritized the risk factors, the next step is to begin removing them.

How can those risk factors be controlled?

The best way to address a hazard is by eliminating it all together or substituting a safer alternative. If that can't be done the next best way to address a hazard is to reduce exposure through the use of proper equipment and re-design of the work place. If both of those are not practical then work procedures or safe practices should be used to control a hazard. Some controls are simple “adjustments” to the job process or design [or things that can be done **NOW**]; others require purchasing equipment or upgrading facilities and equipment [or things that must be done **LATER**].

The easiest way to eliminate or reduce the risk of back injury is to remove the risk factors beginning with the most frequent AND most severe conditions. *Use the table of control measures on the following page to address each of the risk factors you identified above.*

Control Measures

<i>Select the appropriate control measure listed below. Check the column on the left if the control measure is something that can be implemented right away OR check the column on the right if the control measure must be implemented later.</i>	Now	Later
Controls that ELIMINATE lifting & carrying		

Mechanical lift		
Cart		
Hand-truck		
Dolly		
Fork lift		
Vacuum lift		
Hoist		
Pallet jack		
Trash lift / dumper		
Spring loaded bin (raises the load inside)		
Powered stacker		
Skate-wheel table		
Skid-steerer (bob-cat)		
Pump, siphon or hose to fill buckets		
Bucket with drain		
Other:		
Controls that reduce awkward postures, reduce force and make it easier to move or hold onto objects		
Portable work platform		
Adjustable height table or bench		
Turn-table		
Industrial tilter		
Pail tipper		
Smaller containers / bags / bundles		
Lighter materials		
Step stool		
Portable steps		
Adjustable tilt-stands		
Angled shelving		
Friction reducing devices		
Lifting straps or other devices to put handles on objects		
Chair with proper lumbar support		
Foot rest / ensure that feet are firmly on the ground while seated		
Adjustable height sit-stand stool		
Rolling creeper		
Extension handles for tools and equipment		
Bit extension shafts		
Skid plates / hose-placing-discs for concrete hoses		
Laser guided automated screeders		
Spring loaded or pneumatic finishing tools		

Split-level adjustable scaffolding or walkthrough scaffolding		
Properly maintain wheels on carts and equipment		
Replace smaller wheels with larger ones on carts and equipment		
Tools that can increase or maximize leverage		
Saw-horses, jacks or other proper support devices		
Trash and laundry barrels with vent holes		
Smaller trash or linen bags		
Wide telescoping mop handles		
Microfiber mop heads		
Smaller mop heads		
Long handled scrubbers		
Powered scrubbers		
Laundry hooks		
Heavy rubber anti fatigue mats		
Smaller pans or trays		
Replace low ovens		
Install foot rails		
Sink inserts		
Hi-low electric beds		
Slide sheets		
Pivot-discs		
Slings that require less turning to use		
Gait belt or an ergonomic walking belt		
Other:		
Controls that minimize risk factors through process or design		
Use elevators instead of ramps /stairs		
Re-design the workplace		
Decrease the lateral distance the object must be carried		
Re-design the task (change policies / procedures)		
Re-design lines to minimize bending, reaching and twisting		
Reduce the number of times objects must be lifted or moved		
Re-arrange the workplace		
Reduce the vertical distance objects must be lifted		
Plan work so tasks are performed above the knee and below the shoulders		
Rotate job tasks		
Store heavy objects at waist level		
Remove obstructions or objects that get in the way		
Take micro-breaks		

Keep floors free of standing water		
Keep floors clear of debris		
Wear slip resistant shoes		
Update care plans		
Other:		

Now that you have identified all the possible control measures, the next step is to begin changing the job.

It can take time to purchase equipment and re-design the workplace. Don't sit back and wait. Any control measure that can immediately be implemented should put in place as soon as possible to reduce the hazard.

List the top 5 control measures that you identified. *If the control can be implemented now, record it on the left. If the control must be purchased, built or redesigned later, list it on the right.*

NOW	LATER
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

Now that you have identified who is getting hurt, what is causing the injuries AND how they can be prevented, the next step is to get this information into the hands of people who can help you.

What are your next steps?

At this point you have identified a problem, found the potential cause(s) AND have potential solution(s). The next step is to determine the best person(s) to whom you will present this information.

Who are the best people for you to talk to about implementing these hazard controls?

- Local / Unit President
- Labor Relations Specialist
- Occupational Safety and Health Specialist
- Other: _____
- Immediate Supervisor
- Department Manager
- Facility Director

Now that you have identified the people you need to speak to, the next step is to follow through to ensure that appropriate controls are implemented.

Recommending Corrective Action

Any recommended corrective actions that require organizational approval, should include information that documents the problem and the benefits of the solution. It is always a good idea to put requests in writing. Before you write your request, what information do you need to develop the strongest justification for your proposal?

What additional information do you need to make your best argument?

- Injury and illness logs
- Product information
- More information about the hazard
- Other: _____
- Specific accident reports
- Cost – Benefit analysis
- Standard Operating Procedures

Be clear.

Be accurate.

Be part of the solution.

For additional assistance, contact your Agency or the CSEA Safety & Health Department.