



## for Food Service

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### Store it Smartly and Lift it Safely

Employees injure their backs more frequently than any other body part. Most back problems occur over a period of time. Follow this advice to help prevent these injuries.

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✓ **Stack** heavier items on the middle shelves.

✓ **Store** lighter goods on the top shelves.

✓ **Stack** items used most frequently at a convenient waist level.

✓ **Get** help lifting heavy items.

✓ **Keep** storage areas clear and free from obstructions.

✓ **Use** a stool or ladder to access items on shelves. Do not stand on chairs or boxes that might tip over.

✓ **Lighten** the load to be lifted. Buy bulk goods in smaller, easier to handle containers.

✓ **Limit lifting by hand.** Use available equipment such as carts, hand trucks and pallet jacks to help with lifting and transporting products.

✓ **Use proper lifting techniques.** Learn to lift properly and stay fit to help reduce the risk of injury from lifting.

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#### Before lifting, size up the load:

- Wear gloves to protect hands from nails and splinters.
- Use a hand cart if possible.
- Get help with heavy loads.
- See that the load is balanced and stable.
- Do not lift a load that is too heavy, slippery, hot, or unevenly balanced.
- Make sure you have a clear traveling path.
- Stretch or “warm up” your back before lifting.

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#### Lifting:

- Bring the load as close to you as possible before lifting. Avoid reaching across something to lift a load. This moves the load away from the body and increases your chance of injury.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Keep your head up, your back straight, and bend at your hips.
- Shift your feet to turn; don't twist your body. Keep your hips in line with your shoulders.
- Keep the load directly in front of your body. Avoid reaching to the side. Avoid twisting.
- Try to avoid lifting heavy loads above your waist.
- Pushing is better for your back than pulling. Push evenly with both hands.

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#### Lowering:

- Body position is just as important when setting the load down as when picking the load up. Use your leg muscles to comfortably lower the load by bending your knees.
- Make certain that your fingers and toes are clear before setting the load down.

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