



Tips to Avoid Overexertion



“Overexertion occurs when the load, whether lifted, carried, pushed, pulled or otherwise handled, exceeds the limits of the human joint system doing the work.”

Overexertion injuries generally fall into two categories:

- Sprains – stretching or tearing ligaments
- Strains – stretching or tearing tendons or muscles

Overexertion injuries have been associated with these activities:

- Lifting/reaching
- Repeated bending at the waist/bending with twisting
- Long-term bending at the waist
- Pushing/pulling/carrying
- Long term poor posture (sitting or standing)

Personal factors have also been associated with overexertion injuries:

- Poor physical condition (losing the strength and endurance to perform physical tasks without strain)
- Excess body weight

Common conditions when injuries occur:

- Moving quickly to perform the task
- Positioned in an awkward posture



So...Perform the task twice: Once with your mind and once with your body. As you think about the task, determine what has to be done to perform it safely and then follow through.

Tips for Avoiding Overexertion Injuries:

- Use proper lifting techniques
- Assess the weight of the load (by observing or testing)
- Make sure your footing is stable and the path is clear
- Keep the load as close to the body as possible
- Keep the back straight
- Avoid twisting
- Avoid heavy loads (break down into multiple loads if possible)
- Get help with heavy loads
- If you have the option, push rather than pull
- Avoid overreaching while retrieving items
- Arrange storage to facilitate safe retrieval of items
- Reduce bending or take breaks during activities that require bending or working in awkward positions

