



October 2020

Protect your back while on the job: Tips for safe lifting

It is often necessary to unload a skid or pallet by hand.

On some construction sites, workers are taking a few minutes to do stretching exercises before tackling an unloading job. It's a good idea because stretching warms up muscles and tendons and prepares them for work. Stretching your muscles before starting an unloading job (or any other lifting job, for that matter) could prevent strains, sprains and muscle injuries.

Combining exercise and safe lifting practices could very well protect you from an injury.

Consider these points before moving materials:

- ◆ Go over your path. Make sure all trip hazards are removed and that others know of your intentions.
- ◆ Don't lift heavy objects from ground level if you can avoid it and don't try to carry loads that are too heavy on your own. Get help.
- ◆ Long materials like pipes and lumber may not be heavy, but could pose a balance problem.
- ◆ Find a helper to share the work.
- ◆ Take frequent rest breaks to prevent muscle fatigue when you are unloading a number of items.

Remember the basics of good lifting:

1. Size up the load. Test its weight by lifting a corner. If it's too heavy or awkward, get help, get a mechanical lifting device or split up the load.
2. Place your feet close to the object.
3. Bend your knees and get a good handhold.
4. Smoothly lift straight up. Allow your legs, not your back, to do the work.
5. Don't twist or turn your body after you have made the lift. Keep the load close to you and steady.
6. Set the load down by lowering it slowly, bending your knees and letting your legs do most of the work. Don't let go until it is secure on the floor.



Construction industry examines worker safety during COVID-19 pandemic

The construction industry is eager to get back to work, but construction firms face a new safety challenge as the United States continues to battle COVID-19 — keeping workers healthy.

As the economy continues to re-open, construction workers face increased risk while on the job.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) acting administrator Loren Sweatt held a June webinar to encourage employers to examine existing practices and look for possible areas of improvement.

OSHA-recommended guidance includes:

- ◆ All construction workers should maintain at least six feet of distance between each other whenever possible
- ◆ Frequently clean and disinfect common touch points.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also recommend that:

**COVID-19
Construction
Guidelines**

- ◆ All construction workers should wear cloth face coverings
- ◆ Personal protective equipment (PPE) should also be utilized when appropriate
- ◆ Workers should limit tool sharing
- ◆ Exercise caution in trailers, portable restrooms and other shared spaces.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Is it time for you or a loved one to get an annual breast exam?

Breast cancer remains a major health concern for women, ranking as the second leading cause of cancer death in women (only lung cancer kills more women each year).

The chance that a woman will die from breast cancer is about one in 38 (about 2.6 percent). Breast cancer, especially when caught early, is often treatable.

You can do some things to catch breast cancer early and minimize your risk.

- ◆ Live a healthy lifestyle. Maintain a healthy body mass index (BMI). Don't smoke. Avoid alcohol.
- ◆ Be physically active. Participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day and take steps to stay within your healthy weight range.
- ◆ Self-examination. All women over age 20 should perform breast self-examination each month. All lumps are not cancerous, but only a doctor can tell the difference. If you find a lump, see your doctor.
- ◆ Mammograms. Scientific studies show that for women over age 50, routine mammography can find breast cancer at an early, treatable stage.

The National Institutes of Health have provided these pros and cons for women in their 40s to consider.

Some factors are out of a person's control, but these known risk factors should make women more vigilant.

- ◆ Family history. If your mother or sisters have had breast cancer, you might also have a higher risk. Only about five to 10 percent of breast cancer is hereditary. Talk to your doctor about genetic counseling and advanced screening.
- ◆ Breast density. Women with high breast density have a higher risk of getting breast cancer. This could be in part because the more dense the breast tissue, the more difficult it is to detect small abnormalities.
- ◆ Hormone replacement therapy at menopause can be a risk factor for breast cancer.

One key idea: Don't let COVID-19 fears stop you from getting your annual mammogram.

Raking leaves: Not a chore, it's exercise!

Here it is, the exercise you can get during only a week or two of the year: Raking leaves.

Raking on a beautiful fall day gives you a chance to work out in nature's health club. No fancy gear needed. No trip to the court or the health club, just put on an old shirt and jeans.

Just 30 minutes of rigorous raking burns up about 200 calories. Here's how to do it:

- ◆ Before starting, loosen up your arms, legs and back with some stretching so you won't get sore muscles.
- ◆ Keep knees slightly bent and use your arms and legs, not your back, for movement.
- ◆ Rake with a sweeping motion, breathing in as you extend the rake and out as you sweep it back toward yourself.
- ◆ Work in repetitious movements. Numbers don't matter, but pattern does.
- ◆ When you get tired, quit and save the rest for tomorrow.



Cook Like a Pro Tip: Stir-Fry



Four rules for a perfect stir-fry:

1. Do all the chopping and measuring before you turn on the burner.
2. Before you add any food to the skillet, make sure the oil is very hot—that means shimmering but not smoking.
3. Don't turn the heat down.
4. Keep the food moving constantly.