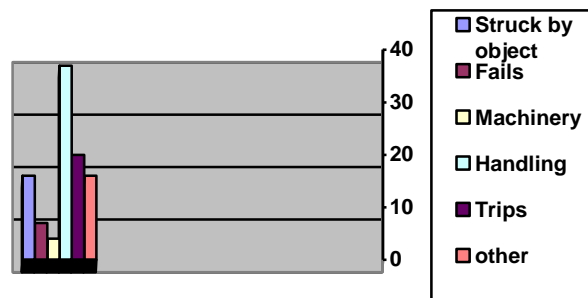




SAFE MANUAL HANDLING

Did you know that 20,000 people in the UK alone injure themselves at work every year by lifting things incorrectly?

This accounts for 37% of accidents reported (see below) we do not want to add to that statistic, remember 'if in doubt don't lift, Get some help!'



MAINTAIN GENERAL SPINAL HEALTH BY AVOIDING STRAIN:

Some of the most common causes of stress and strain on the spine are:

- Slouching in chairs
- Driving in hunched positions
- Standing badly
- Lifting incorrectly
- Sleeping on sagging mattresses
- Being unfit
- Generally overdoing it

CORRECT LIFTING AND CARRYING TECHNIQUE

Lifting and carrying loads correctly will dramatically reduce your risk of injury. By following the simple steps shown below will help ensure you use the correct lifting techniques.

1. Look at load
2. Foot position
3. Bend knees/back straight (natural position)
4. Test load/firm grip/head up
5. Lift with the legs/load close to body whilst carrying
6. Put down with care



REMEMBER MANUAL HANDLING BEGINS WITH YOU

Keep it close to the body

The further away the load, the more stress on your lower back. Holding a load at arms length puts five times more weight on your back than holding it close to you. Keeping it close to your chest makes you more stable.

Check your feet

Get close to the job. Stand square on to the load, with your leading leg as far forward as comfortable, preferably facing the direction you're going to move in next.

Use your legs

If you have to bend down to pick something up, don't stoop, bend the legs and use your strong leg muscles to take the weight. It's not a good idea to handle loads when sitting down, you can't use your leg muscles, you can't use your body weight as counter balance and you're asking too much of your arms and upper body.

Pulling and pushing power

You have more power when pulling or pushing if your footing is secure. Make sure the floor is dry and solid. Grip the load between waist and shoulder to ease strain on the back and the arms. Even better, turn your back to it and push with your legs: they have strong leg muscles for a reason

Is it too big?

Make sure that the load is small enough to enable you to get a good grip, and see where you're going. If any side of what you're carrying -length, width or height is more than 75cm then you run a greater chance of injuring yourself. Make sure you know where the centre of gravity is; keep the heaviest side nearest to your body.

Not too far

If you can lift a load and carry it easily against your body, you'll also be able to carry it safely. Don't carry it too far. More than 10metres and you'll probably be using all your energy in carrying the load and have none left to put it down safely.

Don't twist

You could hurt your back. Lift, carry and place in one direction where possible. If you have to put a load in an exact possible, put it down first and then adjust it when the weight is off you.