**Objective: Lift properly to minimize risk of injuries.**

**Trainer’s Note**

Problems and injuries can arise from overexertion. For this module:

 • Review the information on lifting, lifting hazards, and safe lifting.

 • Describe jobs that might result in overexertion.

 • Ask a worker to demonstrate appropriate lifting techniques.

 • Cover some practical tips to avoid overexertion.

 • Review the important points.

 • Have workers take the True/False quiz to check their learning.

**Background**

Approximately 25 percent of workplace injuries result from lifting, pulling, or pushing objects. The part of the body most often injured is the back.

**Material Handling — Think Before Lifting**

* Arrange your package delivery and material handling systems so that heavy loads are lifted and carried near the waist, between knee height and shoulder height.
* When possible, set heavy objects on pallets, benches, or other supports near waist height — not on the ground. It is impossible to achieve a good back position when lifting heavy objects from the ground.
* Have a handling plan that avoids slippery hazards and includes a destination.
* Test the load to be sure that it can be safely carried.
* Know the limits! If the load is too heavy, awkward, or bulky to carry alone, get help.
* Use machinery or equipment, such as a pushcart, hand truck, wheelbarrow, forklift, or hoist.
* Do not overlook the use of levers, inclined planes, or rollers to move loads.

Serious back injuries occur because of improper lifting techniques, like these:

* Bending from the waist to pick up objects.
* Lifting boxes above the chest.
* Twisting the body to carry or lift a heavy box or object.
* Lifting objects when in poor physical condition.

**Guidelines for Safe Lifting**

* **Use a proper lifting position.** Lift with your knees and legs — not with your back.
* **Get a good grip.** Grasp the load firmly. Use gloves if they allow for a better grip.
* **Get a good footing.** Center body weight to provide a powerful line of thrust and good balance.
* **Keep it close.** Grasp the load firmly and lift towards the belt buckle. Hold the load close to the body to avoid putting pressure on the back.
* **Lift smoothly.** Raise, carry, and lower the load smoothly. Never jerk a load.
* **Avoid twisting.** If turning is required while lifting or carrying a load, move the feet to turn the body instead of twisting at the waist.
* **Push.** Push rather than pull the load.

**Review These Important Points**

* Approximately 25 percent of work-related injuries result from overexertion, mainly from lifting.
* Think and plan before lifting.
* Push rather than pull the load.
* Use mechanical means whenever possible.
* Avoid twisting when lifting or setting down a load. Move the feet to turn the body instead of twisting at the waist.

**Verbal Quiz**

1. For best results, always pull rather than push a load. **T F**

2. Wear gloves if they allow for a better grip. **T F**

3. Approximately 25 percent of all injuries result from overexertion, mainly from **T F**  lifting, pulling, or pushing objects.

4. Use mechanical means to handle materials when possible. **T F**

5. To prevent injuries, you should move the feet to turn the body instead of twisting **T F**
 at the waist.

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| Answer Key |
| 1 | F |
| 2 | T |
| 3 | T |
| 4 | T |
| 5 | T |