



## MANUAL HANDLING

### INTRODUCTION

Did you know that manual handling is the biggest cause of injury in the workplace?

Manual handling injuries can impact on both your work and home life; preventing you from doing the things you enjoy the most.

Manual handling injuries affect the following parts of the body:

- Neck and shoulders: 20%
- Wrist and hands: 20%
- Backs, hips and legs: 60%.

If you are required to lift something, make sure you plan the lift first. Ask yourself:

- What am I lifting? How heavy is it? Is it bulky? Should I ask for help? Can the load be sub-divided or broken down into smaller loads?
- Where am I moving the load to? Is there a clear space to place the load?
- Is the path you will be taking clear? Are there any trip hazards?



### ONCE THE PLANNING IS DONE, FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

- Stand in close to the load – have a firm grip on the object
- Feet shoulder width apart – create a firm platform
- Elbows to knees
- Arms long
- Butt down – this ensures your legs to do the work and not your back
- Chest up – this ensures your lumbar region is locked in and helps to protect your back
- Breathe out as you lift – this will lessen the strain on your back



**Remember to STOP and THINK of the best way to preform a task. Our bodies are built to last a lifetime...but only if we look after them.**



## BACK 'N ACTION – MOVING SAFELY...

Lifting, whilst bending and twisting, is the tri-factor guaranteed to mess with your spine, particularly the lumbar region, which is primarily designed to move forwards and backwards, and from side to side.

So if you need to change direction while moving, move your feet to point the load and your body in the right direction before you step off i.e. make sure that your nose follows your toes.

## STRETCHING EXERCISES

Simple stretching exercises prepare the body for physical activity, ease stress in our muscles and help prevent injuries.

### BACK STRETCH

- Remain seated
- Feet shoulder width apart
- Feet flat on the floor
- Chin to chest
- Bend forward, sliding hands down legs over knees towards toes
- Bend as far as is comfortable.



### SEATED STRETCH

- Remain seated
- Feet shoulder width apart
- Place the palm of your left hand on the inside of your left knee
- Twist to the right looking over your shoulder while pushing your left knee outwards
- Repeat on right leg.



### HAMSTRING STRETCH

- Stand up
- Place the ball of your right foot on a chair
- Stand up tall
- Look straight ahead
- Place both hands on your right knee
- Apply gentle downward pressure on your right knee.

