

BODY MECHANICS

Body Mechanics – Using the body in the most energy efficient manner so that the strongest muscles do the hardest work. The use of proper body mechanics in daily activities prevents injury, decreases pain, decreases stress on muscles and joints and maximizes your capacity to work, play, or rest while conserving energy.

Principles of Proper Body Mechanics

- 1) Maintain your spinal curves
- 2) Use both sides of your body in a balanced way, keeping your weight evenly distributed. Work at the elbow height with elbows at 90° whenever possible.
- 3) Keep objects and work surfaces close to your body.
- 4) Avoid sudden and jerky movements. Use smooth and steady movements during all activities.
- 5) Push rather than pull.
- 6) Don't twist! Turn to face an item. Movement starts at the feet.
- 7) Stand and work with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- 8) Avoid staying in one position for prolonged periods of time.
- 9) Know your limitations, get help when needed.
- 10) Use mechanical aids for heavy jobs, e.g. put casters on heavy objects, use wheeled carts, etc.

Lifting Instructions

Get as close to the object as possible. Keep your feet at least 12" apart. Tighten your abdominals, maintain the normal curves of your back, keep your head slightly lifted. Use pelvic tilt whenever able. Use your legs (bend your knees, not your back) to get down to the object. Lift the object by using your hip and knee muscles to push up from the floor. Carry the object close to your body. Avoid twisting while lifting or carrying. Turn with your feet.

REMEMBER

- 1) Think before your lift.
- 2) Always test the load.
- 3) Remove obstacles, clear the pathway.
- 4) Unload safely.