

<Insert Organisation Name>

Toolbox Talk:

Manual Handling

Tip: If training employees as opposed to briefing managers/supervisors, we suggest you omit slides 13-17.

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What is Manual Handling?

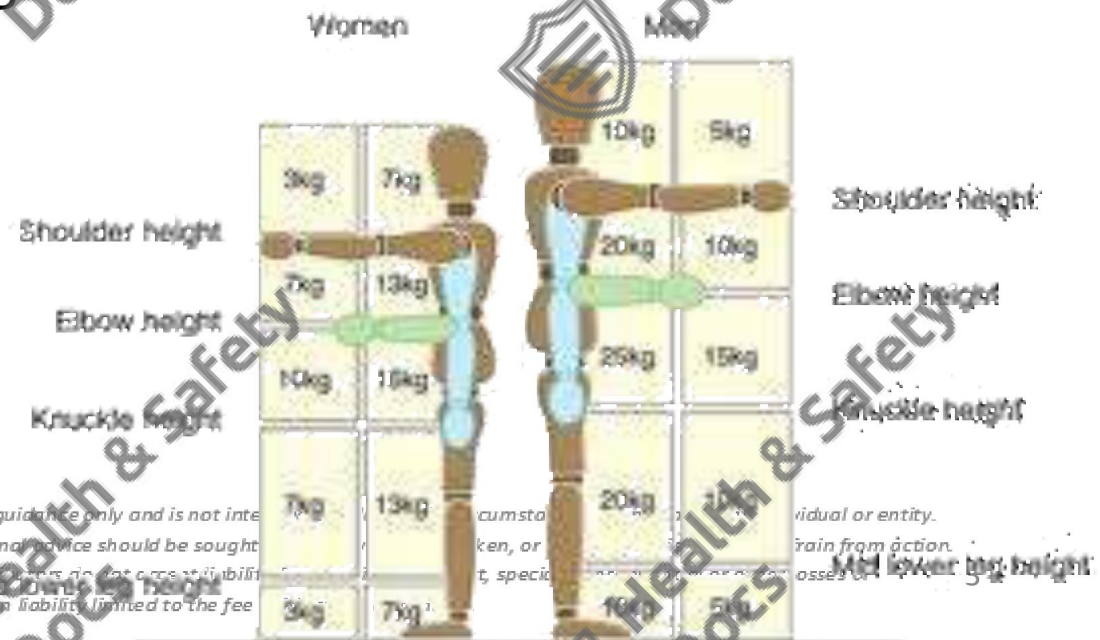
Legal Definition:

“Transporting and supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force”.

Manual Hazards

Typical hazards include:

- Lifting a load that is too heavy or cumbersome – resulting in back injury.
- Poor posture during lifting or poor lifting technique – resulting in back injury.
- Dropping a load – resulting in hand or foot injury.
- Lifting sharp edged or hot loads – resulting in hand injuries.



Manual Handling Injuries

Most common injuries are:

- Muscular sprains and strains
- Back injuries
- Trapped nerves
- Hernia
- Cuts, bruises and abrasions
- Fractures
- Work related upper limb disorders
- Rheumatism.



Main Sites Of Injury

SHOULDERS

10% of all joint disorders
10% of all muscle & ligament injuries
30% of all strain injuries

NECK

10% of spinal injuries

ARMS

28% of all muscle injuries
32% of all bone injuries

UPPER/LOWER BACK

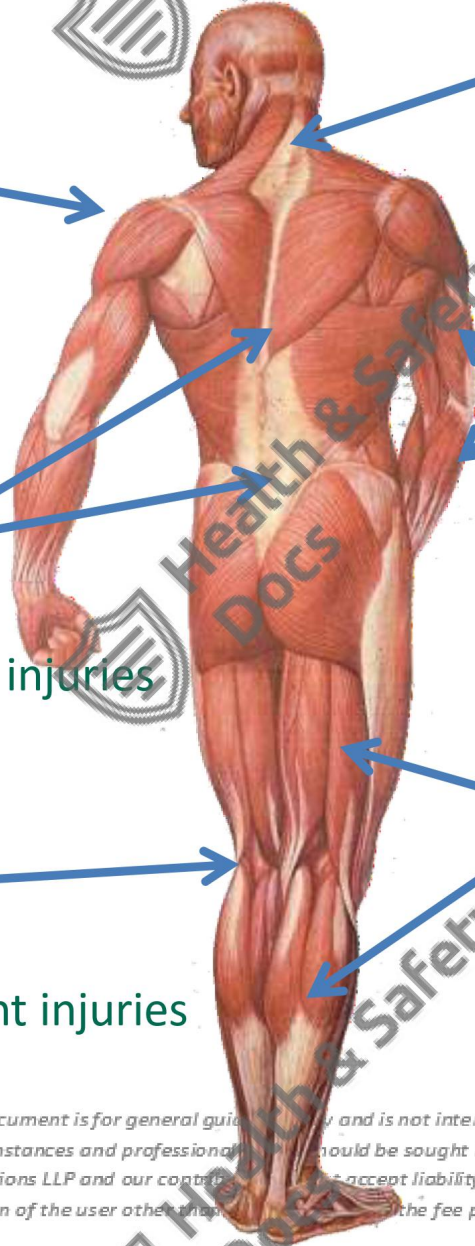
84% of all spinal injuries
30% of all muscle & ligament injuries

KNEES

65% of all joint disorders
12% of all muscle & ligament injuries
5% of all strain injuries

LEGS

2% of all muscle & ligament injuries



Manual Handling Assessments

Hierarchy of measures for manual handling operations:

- 1. Avoid** – manual handling operations should be avoided, so far as is reasonably practicable. This can be achieved by eliminating, automating, mechanising or redesigning the task.
- 2. Assess** – if the task cannot be avoided a detailed assessment should be carried out.
- 3. Reduce** – the risk should be reduced, so far as is reasonably practicable, **either** by the use of mechanical aids **or** making improvements to the task, the load and the working environment.
- 4. Review** – the task should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure a safe system is being adhered to.

Manual Handling Assessments

There are four main factors to be considered during the assessment:

- Load
- Individual
- Task
- Environment

Load Factors to Assess

- Is the load too heavy?
- Is the load bulky or unwieldy?
- Is the load a person (as in healthcare)?
- Is the load difficult to grasp?
- Are the contents of the load likely to shift?
- Is the load sharp, hot or cold or does it contain hazardous materials?

Individual Factors to Assess

- Does the task require unusual characteristics of the individual e.g. special strength?
- Could employees who have health problems (e.g. existing injury) be put at risk?

Task Factors to Assess

- Is the load held or manipulated at a distance from the trunk?
- Is a satisfactory body posture being adopted?
- Must the load be carried for an excessive distance?
- Is there excessive pulling or pushing of the load?
- Is there a risk of sudden movement of the load?
- Is frequent or prolonged physical effort required?
- Are there sufficient rest or recovery periods?
- Is there an imposed rate of work on this task?
- Are the loads being handled while the individual is seated?
- Does the handling involve two or more people?

Environment Factors to Assess

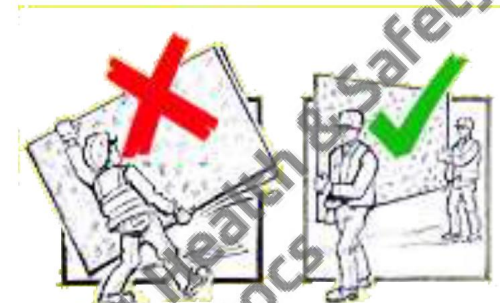
Are there:

- Any space constraints that might inhibit good posture?
- Slippery or uneven floors?
- Variations in levels of floors or work surfaces?
- Extremes of temperatures and humidity?
- Ventilation problems?
- Poor lighting conditions?
- Any other factors that should be considered such as cold/wet weather or clothing that could hinder movement?

Reducing the Risk of Injury

Control measures can be grouped under five headings

- Mechanical assistance
- Task
- Load
- Working environment
- Capability of the individual.



Mechanical Assistance

- Choose and use mechanical aids to assist the manual handling operation. This may not remove all manual handling but it does reduce the risk. Consider pallet trucks, wheel barrows, roller conveyors, chutes as well as powered equipment such as forklifts.

The Task

- Improve the task by changing the layout of the workstation, storing frequently used items at waist height, removing obstacles and using better handling techniques that use the thigh muscles rather than the back.
- Examine the work routine to see if job rotation could be used. Check that seated workers are not lifting loads from the floor.
- Encourage employees to seek help from others if the load is difficult to move. Provide PPE if there is a risk of injury or loss of grip.

The Load

- See if the load can be made lighter, smaller or easier to grasp and manage.
- This can be achieved by splitting the load, positioning of handles or slings, or ensuring the centre of gravity is as close to the handler's body as possible.
- The load should be as stable as possible and surface hazards (e.g. sharp edges) should be removed – or suitable gloves worn.

The Working Environment

- Improve by removing space constraints, cleaning floors regularly and repairing damaged areas repaired.
- Adequate lighting is essential and where possible work should be on one level only.
- Temperatures should be suitable with good ventilation in the working area.

Individual Capability

- Is the correct PPE being worn?
- Is proper consideration being given to the planning and scheduling of rest breaks?
- Is there good communication between employers and managers during risk assessments and work station planning?
- Is there a mechanism in place to deal with sudden changes in the volume of work?
- Have employees been given sufficient training and information, including demonstration of and individual practice in safe lifting technique (see next slide)?
- Does the worker have any special needs or vulnerability and, if so, have these been taken into account?
- Is the worker physically suited to carry out the task in question?
- Are the clothing, footwear, etc. suitable?

Safe Lifting in Practice



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In Closing

- Any questions?
- Remember ‘work safe, go home safe’.
- Look after your back: you only have one and it can't be replaced!
- Always check with your manager or supervisor if you have any concerns about lifting, carrying or other manual handling.