

WATCH YOUR BACK!



Factors contributing to back problems

- Tight hamstrings
- Weak and/or tight back muscles
- Weak stomach muscles
- Tight hip flexors
- Poor posture
- Improper footwear
- Excess body weight
- Inactivity



Check your posture

- Practice good posture when sitting, standing, walking and sleeping
- Stand tall, feet shoulder width apart, feet parallel to one another
- Breathe deeply; relax the shoulders, hips and knees; tuck the buttocks under slightly; lift up from the head
- Imagine a line connecting your ears, shoulders, hips and ankles
- Think alignment



Maintain a healthy weight

- Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy
- Eat 5-9 fruit and veggies daily
- Go with skinless poultry, fish and lean meats
- Include beans, legumes, nuts and seeds in your meal planning
- Choose whole-grain cereals and pasta
- Control portion size
- Replace sugary drinks with plain water
- Read labels



Proper lifting technique

- **Lift twice**—First visualize, *then* lift!
- **Get close to the load with your body**—Feet should be shoulder width apart; bend at the hips and knees to lower yourself towards the load; avoid bending at the waist
- **Support your back** by tightening your stomach muscles through the lift
- **Lift with your legs!**
- **When turning with the load**—Tighten the stomach muscles; step into the direction you are headed, moving the body as one unit; avoid twisting at the ankles, knees or waist
- Avoid lifting heavy objects overhead
- Find a partner when necessary



Stay Active—use it or lose it!

- Maintain strength & flexibility
- Warm-up with 10 minutes of light cardio before stretching or strengthening
- Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds
- Stretch to the point of mild discomfort
- Use **S.M.A.R.T.** goals
- Think abdominals, back, hips and hamstrings



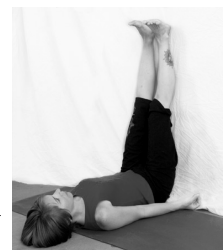
PCSB Employee Wellness Program

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After a day
of standing...



INVERT!