

Orthogo Physical and Aquatic Therapy Newsletter

Coming Soon

Advice on beds.

Clinics

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Aquatic Therapy**
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BACK BASICS

"How do you lift heavy objects?" Inevitably, the response is, "I don't bend my back, I bend at my knees." Fortunately this answer is half right but maintaining a good "lordosis curve" in the low back while lifting will help as well. When lifting most objects a combination of proper spine posture and bending of the knees and hips is best.

Here is a brief summary of low back posture and the rationale behind the current school of thought regarding lifting.

The low back, also called the lumbar spine, is in a position of greatest stability when it is in a "lordotic" or slightly backward curved position. The muscles of the low back and the abdominals are able to maximize their support and protection of the lumbar spine when it is in this "lordotic" posture.

In contrast, medical research suggests that when you move into a full squat to pick something up, your low back actually bends quite a bit. This forward bent or "kyphotic" posture is not a stable position for the low back. Pressure increases in the disks of the low back and the muscles are not as well equipped to protect the low back. Not only is the low back taxed when you squat, this posture places a compressive load of up to seven times your body weight on the knees.

Because "bending at the knees" and moving into a full squat when lifting place quite a bit of stress on the back and knees, the following rules are recommended with lifting:

- » Warm up before you do your lifting.
- » Have a Plan Before you Lift
- » Make sure you have a clear path to where you would like to set that down the object you are lifting.
- » Test the Load - if the load seems too heavy for you, make sure you have someone help you out.
- » Keep you back relatively straight and bend your knees.
- » Tighten your abdominals to stabilize the low back before you lift.
- » Keep your feet slightly greater than shoulder width apart so you have a good base of support.
- » Use the power of your thighs to lift the load. Your glutes and thigh muscles are much more capable of lifting heavy objects.
- » Keep the load close to your body at the level of your waist if possible. This decreases the torque on you low back.

So to everyone, I hope the above information helps keep your low back healthy. If you have any questions, feel free to give us a call.

THIS MONTH'S DOWNLOAD - PROPER LIFTING

For a printable handout that you can take with you and share with others:

Click here

<http://www.ptclinic.com/downloads/lifting.pdf>

Click On or Type the URL above into your browser address bar

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