MANUAL HANDLING AWARENESS TRAINING

THE EDUCATION STATE

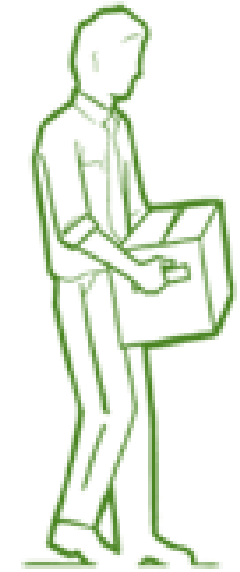
VICTORIA State Government | Education and Training

OUTLINE

- What is manual handling?
- What are the risks of manual handling?
- What makes manual handling hazardous?
- How can the risks be managed?
  - S.M.A.R.T lifting
  - Team lifting
  - Pushing and pulling
  - Manual handling of people
  - Safe storage
- Available supports and resources

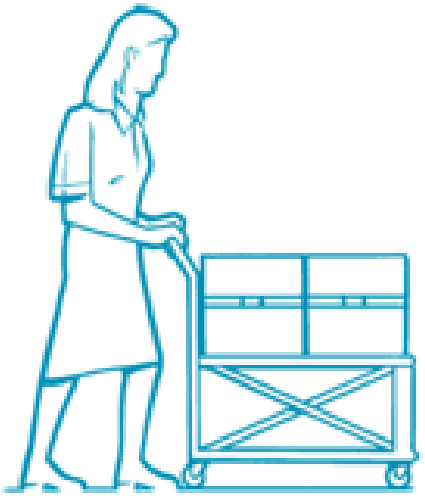
WHAT IS MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling is any activity requiring the use of force, exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull or carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain an object, person or animal.



CARRYING

LIFTING



PUSHING

EXAMPLE MANUAL HANDLING TASKS

- Carrying large number of books
- Lifting and moving sport equipment
- Storing and retrieving boxes above or below shoulder height
- Moving furniture
- Typing at an incorrectly set-up workstation
- Hanging art-work/poster

What are the risks?

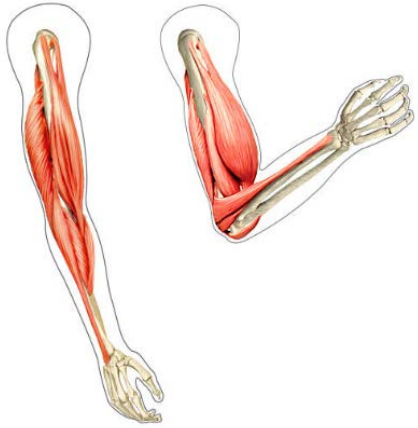
Manual handling injuries make up approximately 10% of total injuries occurring in DET workplaces.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS

Work related musculoskeletal disorders can occur as a result of:

- repeated damage or strain
- a single case of overburdening

Torn Anterior Cruciate Ligament



Bones and muscles while flexing

WMSD may include injuries to:

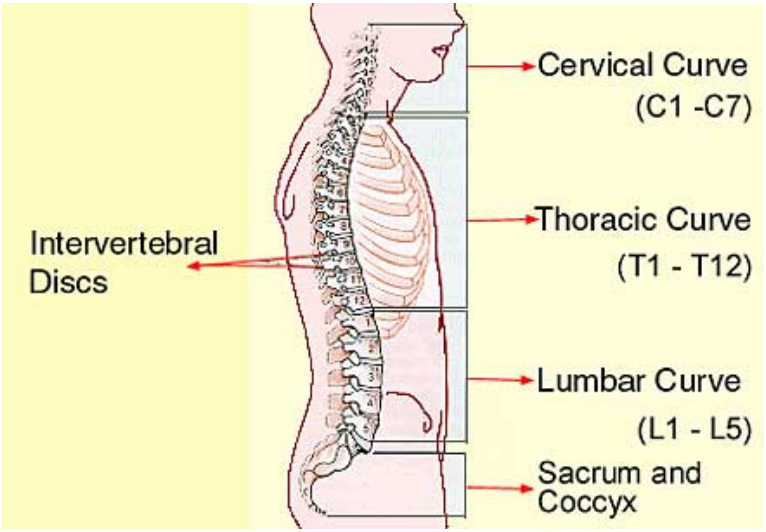
- Muscles
- Ligaments
- Intervertebral disc
- Nerves
- Tendons in the wrist, arms, shoulders, neck or legs

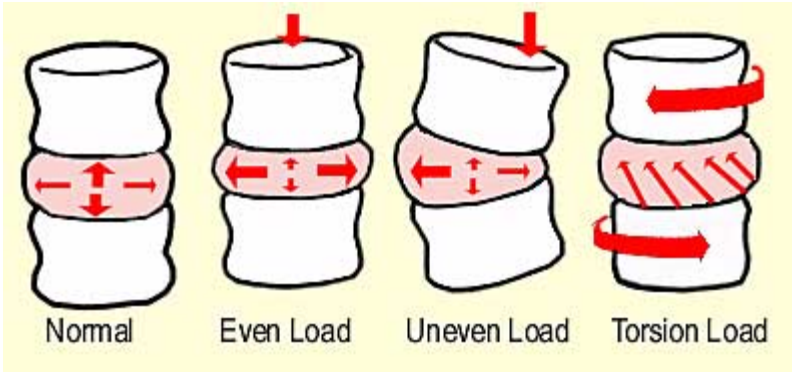
Nervous system

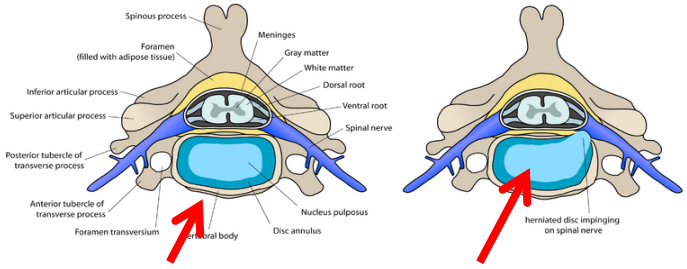
WHAT ARE THE RISKS

The spine in its normal S-curve shape is very flexible, but is easily affected by movements which are: forceful, awkward, asymmetrical and or jerky, especially if the back is bent or twisted while moving.

Carrying a large or heavy load while the back is not in its normal S-curve shape puts much more strain on the discs between the vertebrae.







Normal Disk

Bulging Disk

WHEN DOES IT BECOME HAZARDOUS

Task

Too Strenuous

Awkward Postures

Individual

Individual Physical Capacity

Training/Supervision

Load

Too Heavy

Too Large

Environment

Climate (heat / cold, ventilation etc.)

Available Space

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO?

1. **IDENTIFY MANUAL HANDLING TASKS**
   - Talk to colleagues
   - Conduct a walk through the workplace
2. **ASSESS THE LEVEL RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE TASK**
   - Document manual handling in the OHS Risk Register
   - Complete risk assessment where the tasks or level of risk is uncertain
3. **IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT CONTROLS**
   - Talk to colleagues undertaking task
   - Implement risk controls
   - Document risk controls
   - Report all manual handling incidents on eduSafe

EXAMPLE RISK CONTROLS

1. **Don’t undertake the task**

2. **Change the environment**

EXAMPLE RISK CONTROLS

3. Change the nature of the work

4. Change the object

EXAMPLE RISK CONTROLS CNT.

5. Use mechanical aids

6. Administrative Aids

SMART LIFTING

Size up that load

- Assess the load (shape, size and weight)
- Determine where the load needs to be moved and placed

Move the load as close to the body as possible

- Carry the load as close to the body as possible
- Secure your grip

Always bend your knees

- Keep feet apart, in a comfortable position (usually in line with the hips)
- Minimise lower back bending
- Bend knees (squat or semi-squat position

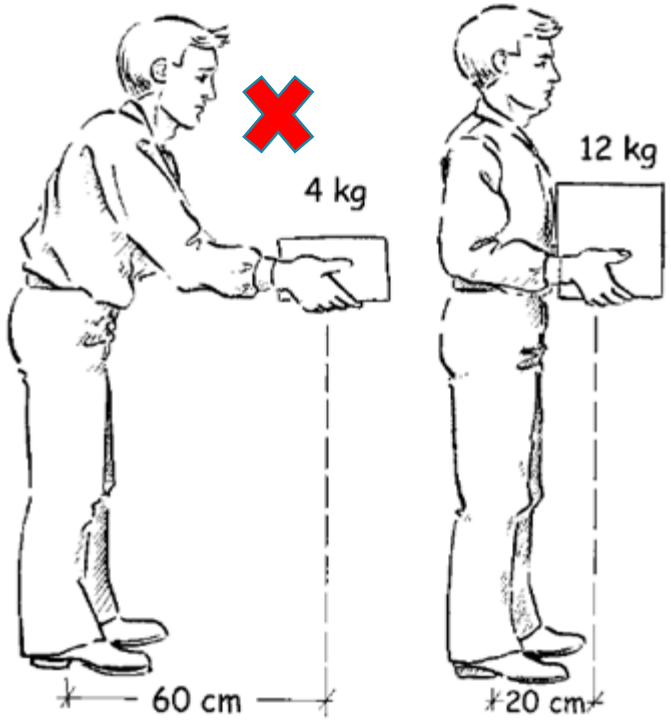
Raise the load with your legs

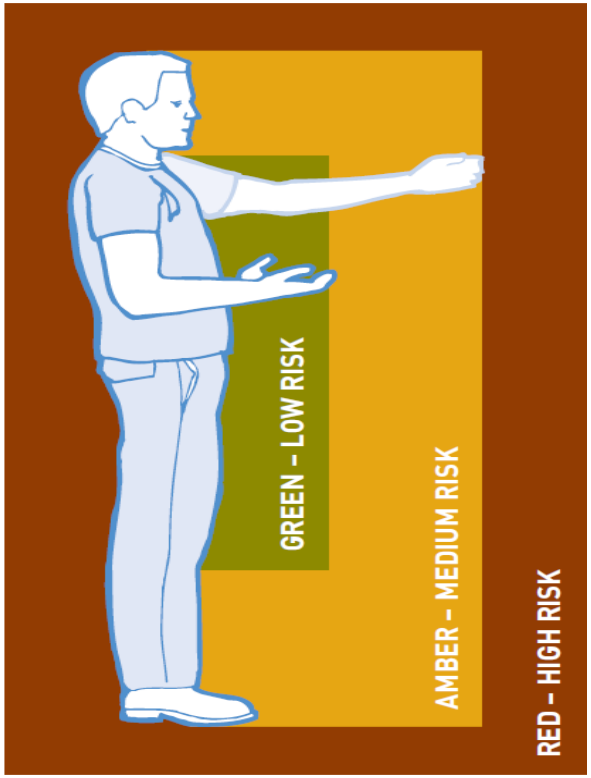
- Lift the load with your legs, not your back, in a smooth motion (avoid twisting or jerky movements)
- Maintain normal curvature of the spine

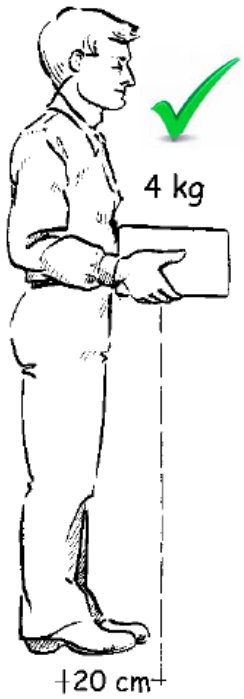
Turn your feet in the direction you want to move

- Change direction by pointing your feet and not twisting your back
- To set the load down, squat down, keep your head up and allow your legs to carry the weight

SMART LIFTING





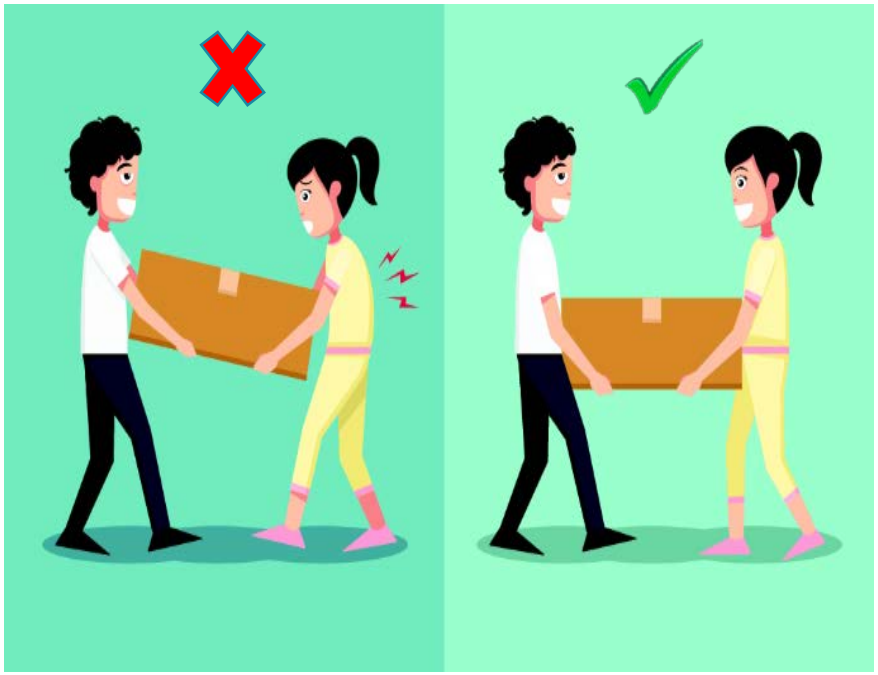


Lifting a 4kg load held 6cm in front of the body requires about the same effort as lifting a 12kg load held 20cm in front of the body.

Team lifting

Consider:

- Are there enough people?
- Are all persons of the same size with similar strength?
- Are there any known pre-existing injuries?
- Who is coordinating the lift?
- Is there a plan, and has been communicated to those involved?



PUSHING AND PULLING

Consider:

- when pushing, lean forward
- Stand close to the trolley
- when pulling, lean backwards (**pushing is preferable** as it involves less work by the lower back muscles and allows for maximum use of body weight). It allows employees to adopt a forward facing posture, providing clearer vision in the direction of travel
- ensuring you have a good grip
- avoiding twisting and turning
- checking that the handle height is between shoulder and waist height

Manual Handling of people

No lift policy is best, use equipment and the student's own ability to avoid unnecessary manual handling. Always follow Behaviour Support Plans for individuals who cannot assist with their own movement.

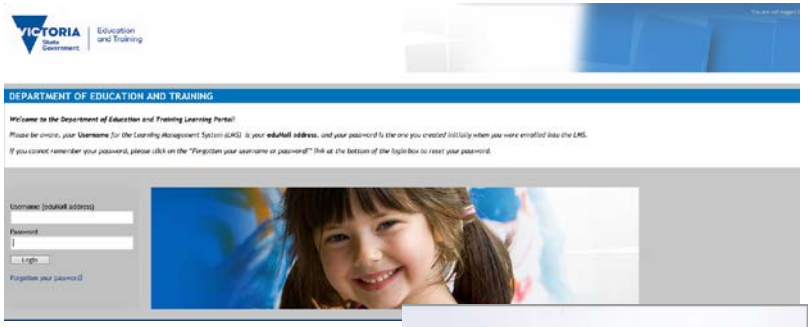
Safe storage

Consider:

- Storing frequently and heavy items between waist and shoulder height
- Storing smaller, lightweight or infrequently used items in lower or higher areas
- Knowing shelving weight limits
- Having access to a step-ladder
- Testing the weight of the object before picking it up
- Conducting quarterly workplace inspections

SUPPORTS

- Principal / Manager
- Health and Safety Representative
- Free OHS Advisory Service ph. 1300 074 715 or email safety@edumail.vic.gov.au
- Regional OHS/Facilities Support Officers
- Manual Handling OHS documentation
- Safety Management for School Leaders Training
- OHS eLearning Modules – Manual Handling & Ergonomics



Questions