

Handle correctly- reduce your risk of injury

How to prevent a manual handling injury

Working in an industry that involves carrying out multiple repetitive and complex handling tasks can pose a serious threat to health and cause various manual handling injuries if the task is not carried out correctly.

Here at Mentor, we understand how important it is to train your staff to obtain the right skills and knowledge to handle equipment safely.

We have devised some useful tips as part of the Go Home Healthy campaign to help those responsible for overseeing or carrying out manual handling operations to stay aware of the risks involved and prevent an injury from happening.

1. Identify and control the risks

A simple walkthrough of the workplace is a good way to identify any risks prior to carrying out the task. This will allow you to plan your journey, minimising any strenuous movements such as stretching, overreaching and twisting.

2. Consider all aspects of the task

It is important to consider what the outcome for the task is and what you aim to achieve. Preparing to move the load is crucial- planning a route to take, establishing how far you will be travelling and if other team members are acquired to help move the load will simplify the process and allow you to minimise the result of injury.

3. Ensure the individual carrying out the task is capable

Consider the age, gender, build and physical competences of the individual to ensure they can complete the job safely. If the person in questions is not fully capable to carry out the job, it is important that they seek for assistance.

4. Consider environmental factors

If the task involves moving a load through different areas, environmental factors need to be assessed to ensure a safe working practice. This includes looking at the surrounding atmosphere such as the temperature- is the ground too hot or cold? Are there any steps or slopes that are a potential risk? Is the weather windy and does this affect moving the load?

5. Ensure your workforce are trained

Manual handling training will ensure that those involved in moving various loads within the workplace are equipped with the skills and knowledge to do so as safely as possible. A good training course will highlight correct lifting techniques and raise awareness of the dangers of bad practice.

One of the most common injuries as a result of bad manual handling practice is Musculoskeletal Disorders, primarily damages to the back, joints and limbs.

These injuries can affect the quality of life of your workforce and had a negative impact on their enjoyment at work. By sparing a few minutes to assess your workforce and consider the risks and hazards that can occur from manual handling operations, you are providing a safer working environment for your staff and promoting good practice within the industry.