

June 2008

RM News & Notes

Tip of the Week:

STRETCH YOUR BACK

Stretching Exercises

Start with deep breathing exercises: Breath in through the nose and hold for a count of three. Breathe out through the mouth.

Continue deep breathing while doing the following stretching exercise. Remember: Don't push too hard and DON'T hold your breath!!!

Neck stretches:

Sit or stand in a relaxed position with arms at your sides. Drop your head forward onto your chest and hold for a count of three. Return to upright, and then extend head back so that you are looking at the ceiling. Hold for a count of three. Repeat.

Shoulder Shrugs:

Shrug forward and hold for a count of three. Relax. Repeat.

Gentle Arch Stretches:

Stand with feet hip-width apart, hands on small of back. Gently arch backward and forward.

Side stretches:

Stand with feet hip-width apart with one arm overhead. Gently stretch arm as you bend to one side. Switch arms and repeat.

Consider Ergonomics - Arrange your work so that your movements coordinate smoothly with less stressful and straining efforts.

Columbia County Board of Commissioners Risk Management Department

630 Ronald Reagan Drive, Building B
PO Box 498
Evans, Georgia 30809
Fax: 706-868-3301

Darlene M. Bartlett ARM
Risk Manager

706-868-3363

dbartlett@columbiacountyga.gov

Janice A. Matthews CPS/CAP
Risk Management Assistant

706-312-7475

jmatthews@columbiacountyga.gov

Web Page

<http://www.columbiacountyga.gov/home/index.asp?page=2440>

Message from the Risk Manager

Have you ever tried to do anything when your back was hurting? Back pain affects almost everything you do from sleeping, sitting, walking, sports, your job and even your sanity. Yet how many of us make any effort to prevent back injury? Maybe if you are planning to lift something unusually large or heavy, you might think about doing it carefully or proper lifting technique, but what about those normal daily activities like carrying in groceries, throwing that case of drinks in your car or picking up your child? Even when you've done it many times before and had no problem, it only takes one incident to drastically change your life. We only get one back and once it is injured, it may be difficult or impossible to ever get back to your pre-injury, pain free condition. Plus, once you injure your back, you are much more likely to reinjure it. So take a minute and think about your back and how you use it in your daily activities. Make an effort to protect it by using good posture, exercising to maintain a healthy weight and keep your back strong, lift properly and remember that just because you **can** lift something without any help, doesn't mean you should.

Darlene

The Basics of Lifting

Plan your lift

- What are you lifting?
 - Is the load big or awkward?
 - How heavy?
 - Are there good handles or grips?
 - Is the load likely to shift?
- Where are you going with it?
 - Plan your route: shortest may not be safest
 - Wet/slippery surfaces?
 - Obstructions?
 - Short or long distance?
- Other Options
 - Mechanical lifting devices/dollies/hand trucks / etc.
 - Assistance from a second person
 - Can the load be divided into smaller/lighter loads?
 - When in doubt: don't lift alone

Position Yourself Correctly

- Position yourself close to the load
- Feet should be about shoulder width apart, usually with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance.
- Center yourself over the load
- Bend the knees ...keeping the back straight and squat down
- Firmly grip the load making sure you have a good handhold
- Bring the load as close to your body as you can

The Lift

- Using the stronger thigh and leg muscles, slowly straighten your legs until you are standing upright. Keep the back straight.
- Lift smoothly – don't jerk. If the load is too heavy to lift smoothly...get help
- Do not twist or turn your body as you lift; pivot on feet instead of twisting at the waist.
- Lift from waist height whenever you can
- Make sure the load is not blocking your vision once the lift is made

Use Your Head Before You Use Your Back – Many times we get injured because we didn't take a second to think.

Carrying an Object

- If you need to turn to the side, move your feet around. Do not twist at the waist
- Remember to "Hug the Load" as you carefully walk to your destination
- If the load becomes too heavy, unstable or you begin to lose your grip, stop and put it down. Re-assess your lift.
- If the load is about to fall, set it down if there is time or step back and let it go.
- Do not try to adjust your hand hold or "catch" falling objects

Set the Load Down Correctly

- Reverse proper lifting procedures
- Squat by bending the knees and keep the back straight.
- Place the load in front of you
- Set the load down slowly and maintain your grip until you are sure it is secure
- Make sure hands and feet are clear
- Just as you try to lift from waist height whenever possible; it is better to set a load down at waist height rather than lowering to the floor

Other General Lifting / Moving Hints:

1. Always push, don't pull, an object when it is on a cart or dolly
2. Push or slide heavy objects rather than lift them
3. Remember even light loads can cause injury. If you have a lot of lifting to do, try not to do it all at once. Alternate with other work to give your body a chance to recover.
4. Stretch before exerting the back: Simple stretches help prepare the muscle for the lift or movement you are about to make.

County Facts

Approximately 21% of all 2008 Columbia County Workers Compensation injuries that require medical attention are back injuries. The ratio is rising and the injuries are occurring at the most unexpected times. Remember, items that weighs 10 pounds can injure you're back just as easily as lifting an item that weighs 50 or more pounds.

Up Coming Events

Each program is advertised by Risk Management and is available to employees of Columbia County Board of Commissioners and the city employees of Grovetown and Harlem. Additionally, the Defensive Driving Courses may be attended by immediate family members of employees, on a space available basis, for a nominal fee.

Pre-registration is required.

For additional information or to register contact Risk Management. 706-312-7475

Safety Review Board July 10, 2008

Defensive Driving Course – 8 hour June 26, 2008

**July 22, 2008
August 19, 2008**

Defensive Driving Course – 4 hour June 5, 2008

CPR/AED/First Aid August 7, 2008

County Office Closed July 4, 2008

JUNE 2008

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JULY 2008

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AUGUST 2008

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Newsy Notes

Fathers Day Trivia

Sonora Louise Smart Dodd, of Spokane, Washington, started the tradition of Father's Day in the honor of her dad. It was celebrated on June 19, 1910, in Spokane, Washington.

One night a father overheard his son pray: Dear God, Make me the kind of man my Daddy is. Later that night, the Father prayed, Dear God, Make me the kind of man my son wants me to be. - **Anonymous**

