



## Manual Handling

Injuries caused by manual movement of objects are a common occurrence, both in an operational setting or an office environment. These accidents can be easily avoided by consideration of the risks before attempting to move an object and by planning of the activity before it is undertaken.

### 1. Staff Requirements

- 1.1 All staff should receive appropriate Manual Handling training or guidance which should be updated as necessary and use those techniques to avoid injury
- 1.2 Staff that are required to undertake manual handling activities must be capable of completing the task without unnecessary risk to themselves.
- 1.3 All manual handling activities must be assessed before items are moved. Two person lifting should be carried out where individual handling would be considered hazardous.
- 1.4 Pregnant women are at risk of possible miscarriage and the risk of injury is also increased as hormonal changes during pregnancy can affect the laxity of ligaments and joints. As pregnancy progresses it becomes more difficult to achieve and maintain a good posture and this further reduces manual handling capabilities.
- 1.5 Staff who have existing back or upper limb problems should consider whether manual handling will cause further injury. Carrying out even a relatively trivial movement can exacerbate existing injuries and should be considered before attempting to move heavy objects.
- 1.6 If there is good reason to suspect that an individual's state of health might significantly increase the risk of injury from manual handling activities managers must seek advice from the Health and Safety Officer.
- 1.7 Good housekeeping standards must be maintained to minimise slips and trips when moving items.
- 1.8 Where available, consider mechanical lifting aids, such as trolleys, to avoid manual handling.
- 1.9 Avoid repetitive lifting practices as this increases the risk of injury. Take rest breaks where required
- 1.10 Be aware of underfoot conditions and floor surfaces
- 1.11 Heavy items should not be stored above shoulder height unless suitable access equipment is available.
- 1.12 Appropriate PPE must be worn, especially to protect hands and feet .

### 2. Assessment

- 2.1 Before any articles are moved, an assessment should be carried out. The assessment should include :

- Weight of the load
- Shape of the load
- Size of the load
- Rigidity of the load
- Suitable handholds
- Abrasive or sharp edges
- Any/type of wrapping
- Distance that the load must be moved
- Height that the load must be lifted from/to
- Obstructions in the required path of travel

### **3. Organisation Requirements**

- 3.1 Lifting aids or mechanical lifting must be provided where there is a need for such equipment.
- 3.2 Appropriate PPE such as gloves, safety footwear and overalls must be provided to avoid injury and contamination
- 3.3 Work should be planned so that sufficient staff are available to carry out the manual handling task and these tasks should be spread evenly throughout the working day where possible.
- 3.4 Staff must not be instructed to undertake manual handling activities that are beyond the capabilities of the individual.

### **4. Manual Handling Advice**

- 4.1 Carry large and heavy objects as close to the body as possible
- 4.2 Prior to lifting, adopt a stable position with one foot slightly in front to maintain balance.
- 4.3 Adopt a good posture when lifting. The back should be kept straight and knees bent so that the load weight is borne by thighs.
- 4.4 Ensure that your route is not obstructed by articles that could cause you to trip. Ensure you can see adequately with your head up and not obscured by the load.