BACK INJURIES & PREVENTION

Talking Points:

Statistics

1. Around 2 million back injuries reported annually in the workplace
2. 80% of adults experience back injuries at some point
3. Back injuries represent around 20% of all workplace injuries
4. Estimated $225 billion lost annually by US Companies from back injuries

Most Common causes for back injuries in the workplace

1. Improper lifting
2. Uneven weight distribution
3. Pushing, pulling, or dragging heavy objects

Signs and Symptoms of a Back Injury

1. Aching, burning, or shooting pain
2. Tingling or numbness
3. Fatigue, weakness, or inability to move
4. Swelling or tenderness

Tips to Help Prevent a Back Injury

1. Eliminate Manual Lifts – whenever possible, use equipment like forklifts or pallet jacks to handle heavy objects
2. Ergonomically Friendly Work Areas – strategically place commonly used items to limit bending over or reaching up
3. Engineering Controls – install mechanical lifting device or conveyors to limit handling objects
4. Administrative Controls – Use the buddy system for lifting awkward or heavy objects, set limits on manual lifting
5. Practice Proper Lifting Techniques –
   a. Stretch
   b. Ensure walking paths are clear before moving
   c. Get as close to the load as possible
   d. Keep a wide base
   e. Squat down instead of bending over
   f. Keep good posture (eyes up, back straight, chest out, shoulders back)
   g. Lift slowly
   h. Keep the load close to the body
   i. Set down the load properly by squatting down when lowering

For more safety tips and courses, visit **ndsc.org**

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