

PLAYING IT SAFE RESTAURANT

Lifting Basics for Restaurant Workers

Proper lifting techniques can help avoid back pain

Lifting big, bulky items is a common activity for restaurant staffers, but it requires specific safety precautions in order to avoid injury. Lower back injuries are the most common work-related injury and can cause chronic pain.

Lifting Properly

- Clear away any potential obstacles before carrying a tray, moving stock items, etc. Make sure you have cleared a path in the area you are working.
- When lifting bulky items like boxes or heavy bagged goods, get a solid grip and good footing. Use your hands, not your fingers, to grip the item, and position your feet so that one foot is next to the item and one is behind it prior to lifting
- Get under heavy items by bending your knees, not your back. This is the most important lifting technique to remember, as bending over at the waist to reach for the object puts strain on your back, shoulder and neck muscles and can cause serious injury.
- Keep the item you are carrying close to your body.
- Never twist your body when you are lifting. Turn your entire body by using your feet.
- Do not lift above the shoulders or below waist level.

Size up the Load

Before lifting an object, check its weight. Decide if you can handle it alone or if you need assistance. When in doubt, ask for help. Moving an object that is too heavy or bulky can cause severe injury. As a general rule, most men should not lift more than 37 pounds, and most women should not lift more than 28 pounds. If a particular item is heavier than you can handle:

- Get a staffer to help you share the load.
- Break items down into smaller loads if possible.
- When moving stock or bulky items, use a dolly. This tool was made for heavy lifting.

Team Lifting

When others are helping you lift, teamwork is very important. Before lifting heavy items, check the route and clearance. One worker needs to be in a position to observe and direct the other. Lifting and lowering should be done in unison. Don't let the item drop suddenly without warning your partner.

Get Fit!

People who are in poor physical condition are at greater risk for back problems. A conditioning program that includes aerobics, weight training and stretching exercises will help you keep your back fit for lifting.

Be safe and healthy on the job at **Little Caesars** with these helpful tips provided by **Gallagher Risk Management - Tulsa**.

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