

# Aurora **safety** Solutions

## SPINE CARE REMINDERS

Remember, your spine is the central support structure of your body. You must respect this structure so that it will give you strong, flexible service for a long time to come. Your spine also carries your neurological lifeline from the brain to all the other parts of your body. The functional health of your body depends on the flow of an unrestricted nervous system. When your spine suffers, your overall health can suffer too.

### **Taking Care of Your Spine**

*Here are simple yet important adjustments to make for spine health:*

**Lift right.** It's very easy to twist the wrong way and damage your spine if you don't use proper form when lifting an object. Here's how to lift correctly: Stand as close to the object as you can. Use your legs rather than your back or upper body to pull up the item. It will help if you bend your knees so your arms are at the same height as the item. Keep your back straight. If the item is heavy, don't try to lift it yourself - get help.

**Sleep tight.** Sleeping well is important to your overall health. Sleep on your side, not your stomach. Sleeping on your stomach puts too much pressure on your spine.

**Stay active.** The best exercise routine for your back and neck is one that combines stretching, strengthening, and aerobic activity. Exercise also helps you to lose weight or maintain a proper weight.

**Work smart.** Proper ergonomics can help reduce a lot of stress on both the lower and upper back, thus reducing the frequency of conditions ranging from stiff back and headaches to carpal tunnel. Make sure your workspace - whether a laptop, phone, computer desk, or even your car - is set up for your height and functionality. Choose a chair that provides back support. Your knees should be at 90 degrees and your feet should rest comfortably on the floor. Never cradle

your phone between your ear and shoulder. Hold your phone to your ear or use a headset to avoid neck pain. Staying in one position for too long will cause back muscles to tighten up and become immobile.

**Pay attention to any warning signs.** Although it is common to have back pain once in a while, it can indicate a more serious problem. Left untreated, problems with your spine can worsen and become quite serious. Listen to what your body is telling you.

**When retrieving things from a low shelf,** instead of bending over and twisting it is better to kneel down or squat in front of the shelf, pick up the objects holding them close to body, and then stand up using the strong leg muscles and keeping the back straight. Many activities require standing for a while such as brushing your teeth, ironing, washing dishes, or folding laundry. First to avoid fatigue, try to break these duties up into smaller time periods. Second, place one foot on a step or ledge. Do not bend at the waist, instead bend at the knees and keep back straight. Third, use one hand to provide support. And lastly, try to do the activity at a comfortable height.



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