

Tips and Tricks for Protecting Your Spine

- **Upper Body**
 - Carry objects close to your body. Holding an object at a distance makes it heavier due to the lever effect.
 - Do not reach for objects above the horizon. Instead, raise your body on a ladder or step stool so that the object you are retrieving is directly in front of you.
- **Lower Body**
 - Sit with your feet flat on the floor.
 - Do not push off in a swivel chair. Instead, walk the chair to the new position to avoid torqueing motions.
 - Squat with knees bent and arise from the bent position by straightening the knees so that you are lifting with your legs rather than with your back muscles.
 - When picking up an object off the floor, have the object directly in front of you so that your back is not twisted (torqued) when you lift the object.
- **Computer**
 - Place your monitor at eye level or 15 degrees below.
 - Your elbows should be at an angle greater than 90 degrees when typing on a keyboard. You should reach down to the keys as if you are playing a piano.
- **Phone**
 - Do not hold your phone to your ear or grasp your phone between your shoulder and ear. Use headphones or an earpiece instead.
- **Bed Ergonomics**
 - Do not read in bed while holding a book; use a tray with an easel to support the book and just turn the pages.
 - Do not watch TV in bed unless your back is against the headboard so that your head is supported by your spinal column and only balanced (not supported) by the neck and shoulder muscles.