While overexertion affects people differently, the most common injuries are strains and sprains, especially to the lower back.

Overexertion injuries result from excessive physical effort, such as:

- Carrying
- Lowering
- Turning
- Holding
- Pulling
- Lifting
- Pushing

Stop and take a break if you experience the following:

- Dizziness
- Sore or painful muscles
- Pulse higher than recommended exercise pulse for your size and physical condition
- Feeling very hot and sweating profusely
- Low abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Fluttering heartbeat – call your doctor if it lasts more than 30 minutes
- Chest pain – call your doctor immediately

Call 9-1-1 if you experience the following:

- Shortness of breath or labored breathing
- Headache – if severe
- Blue lips and/or fingers
- Lack of coordination

Overexertion

Overexertion is the third leading cause of unintentional injuries in the United States, accounting for about 3.3 million emergency room visits. Whether at work or home, you can take steps to prevent overexertion.

- Working in an awkward posture can place too much stress on the wrong part of your body. Place objects as close to you as possible. Keep your body positioned square to your work. Remember, your toes should always point in the same direction as your nose. Using proper posture may seem unnatural at first, but over time your body will appreciate the safer positions.

- Limit the amount of weight you carry, give yourself enough room to work in a neutral position and keep tools in good working condition. Many people overcompensate for tools that are too worn or broken. When this happens, tools should be replaced.

- Repetitive jobs create muscle tension because they do not allow the muscles enough time to recover. Repeating certain movements for long periods of time also can increase your stress level, causing you to become tense. It is important to take frequent, short breaks.
Overexertion can be prevented

Ergonomics can lessen overexertion injuries. The demands of the job must match the capabilities of the worker. This may require training so you know how to perform a job safely.

Routine exercise and stretching can help prevent overexertion. Strength training to maintain a strong core also can be beneficial.

Use these safe lifting techniques:

- Stretch and warm up before lifting
- Keep your back straight
- Bend your knees
- Never bend or twist your back when lifting
- Never lift with arms extended
- Make sure your footing is solid with your feet shoulder-width apart
- Keep the load being lifted close to your body
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Limit the amount of weight you carry
- Get help to carry heavy, bulky or large loads
- Keep pathways clear to avoid tripping

Whether at work or at home, you can take steps to prevent overexertion.

Share this with your friends and family. For more information, visit nsc.org.

*According to Injury Facts 2011 edition, based on 2008 data*
Beware of repeated motions

Take frequent breaks to avoid overexertion
Ten cuidado con los movimientos repetitivos

Toma descansos frecuentes para prevenir el esfuerzo excesivo
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Overexertion

ACROSS
1. When working in a repetitive job, it's important to take ______, short breaks.
2. Overexertion injuries result from excessive ______ effort, such as pushing, lifting and holding.
3. Never bend or _____ the back when lifting.
4. Repetitive jobs create muscle tension because they do not allow the muscle enough time to_____.
5. Limit the amount of ______ you carry.
6. Keep your body positioned ______ to your work.
7. Overexertion is the third leading cause of ______ injuries in the United States.
8. The most common ______ injuries are strains and sprains, especially of the lower back.
9. Get help to carry heavy, bulky or ______ loads.
10. Your body will appreciate the use of ______ posture.
11. Stretch and ______ up before lifting.
12. Make sure your ______ is solid with your feet shoulder-width apart when lifting.
13. ______ can lessen overexertion injuries.
14. Remember your toes should always point in the same direction as your ______ to reduce the potential for lower back strains and sprains.
15. Some symptoms of overexertion include dizziness, sore ______ and a fast pulse.
16. Give yourself enough room to work in a neutral ______ and keep tools in good working condition.
17. Working in an awkward posture can place too much stress on the wrong part of your ______. Place objects as close to you as possible.
19. Overexertion injuries typically cause ______, which leads to pain and discomfort.
20. Strength training to maintain a strong core, along with ______ and exercise, can help prevent overexertion.

DOWN
1. When working in a repetitive job, it's important to take ______, short breaks.
2. Overexertion injuries result from excessive ______ effort, such as pushing, lifting and holding.
3. Never bend or _____ the back when lifting.
4. Repetitive jobs create muscle tension because they do not allow the muscle enough time to_____.
5. Limit the amount of ______ you carry.
6. Keep your body positioned ______ to your work.
8. The most common ______ injuries are strains and sprains, especially of the lower back.
9. Get help to carry heavy, bulky or ______ loads.
12. Make sure your ______ is solid with your feet shoulder-width apart when lifting.
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20. Strength training to maintain a strong core, along with ______ and exercise, can help prevent overexertion.
CROSSWORD PUZZLE KEY

Overexertion  Teen Driving  Slips, Trips and Falls  On the Road, Off the Phone

ACROSS
5. weight
7. unintentional
10. proper
11. warm
14. nose
15. muscles
16. position
17. body
18. signs
19. inflammation
20. stretching

DOWN
1. frequent
2. physical
3. twist
4. recover
6. square
8. overexertion
9. large
12. footing
13. ergonomics

ACROSS
2. safety belts
3. practice
5. drinking
6. parents
9. teen
10. one
11. months
12. three
13. law
14. comprehensive
16. zero
17. mandatory
18. fifteen
19. shared
20. modeling

DOWN
1. graduated
4. passengers
7. nighttime
8. cell phone
15. earlier

ACROSS
1. vision
3. rungs
7. wheels
8. ladder
9. falls
10. surroundings
12. traffic
13. active
15. tripping
17. distractions
18. exercise
19. unguarded

DOWN
2. spills
4. uneven
5. emergency
6. gates
9. four
11. handrails
14. cords
16. hazards

ACROSS
4. fifty
5. inattention
6. four
8. brain
9. talking
11. park
12. voicemail
14. benefit
16. police
17. serious
18. silent
19. uncomfortable

DOWN
1. visual
2. texting
3. cognitive
6. free
7. trunk
10. safe
13. mechanical
15. eleven