



## Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



### Your Back IQ Test Safety Message

Lifting safely is one the most important things you can do to protect your back throughout your lifetime. Back injuries are a painful, sometimes debilitating, problem in many industries. The key to back care lies with the individual worker. Everyone should be a back care "expert" and be able to answer the following questions:

Q: What's the most important lifting rule to remember?

A: Keep The Load Close! There are many other lifting rules, like "bend your knees and lift with your legs," but you can't do this in every situation. Research has also shown that leg muscles become fatigued when frequent lifts are required, so other techniques must be used as well.

Q: If you don't hold a load close to your body, how much heavier is the "experienced" weight than the actual weight? (Wait for some answers)

A: Ten times as heavy! The back operates as a simple lever, with the fulcrum in the lower back. Back muscles serve as the power arm; the load being lifted is the weight arm, and a 10-1 lever ratio exists in the lower back. The further away you hold the load, the "heavier" it is.

Q: Why never twist with a load? (Wait for some answers)

A: Lumbar (lower back) vertebrae, disks and joints are under the most vertical pressure when lifting a load. Twisting with a load creates a "shearing" effect on these tissues. The more "mileage" you have on your back, the less forgiving it will be under this pressure.