



It's Not *What* You Do, It's *How* You Do It

I can't tell you how many times a week, a patient comes into the office with lower back pain and states they did nothing more than bend over to pick up a piece of paper or just got up out of a chair. They specifically state that they didn't even lift anything heavy and they have done that move a million times before without hurting their back.

This is the classic situation of your back going one way and the rest of you going another way causing a mild sprain in one or more of the joints in the lower back. What follows is a way of using your back while bending forward so that you will greatly reduce your chance of incidental injury. I teach this many times during the day and the technique is the **hip hinge**. It is a subtle but profound difference that keeps you from bending over at the waist, flexing your lumbar spine and putting it at risk for injury. The **hip hinge** maintains the normal curve in the lower back as you bend forward, directing the movement to your hip joints and knees. These techniques were researched and developed by Dr. Stuart McGill of Canada, who trains world-class power weight lifters, who must do it right or risk severe injury. The same movements apply to anyone of any age.

Step 1 – look forward instead of looking down when you bend

Step 2 – stick your buttocks out, maintaining the lower back curve

Step 3 – do a sit down movement, keeping your knees in back of your toes

You will feel more weight in your heels than in your toes

It will feel like you are falling backwards but you will learn balance

Below are several common movements and how they are done incorrectly and correctly using the **hip hinge**.

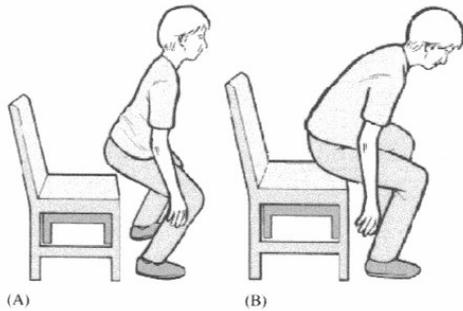


Figure 2 Getting out of chair: (A) correct and (B) incorrect.

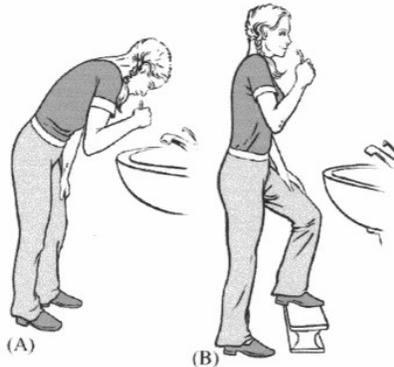


Figure 3 Brushing teeth: (A) incorrect and (B) correct.

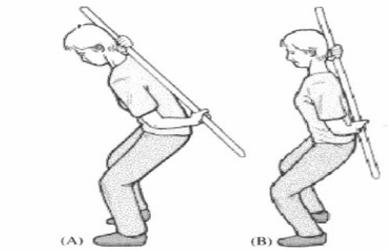


Figure 1 The hip hinge: (A) incorrect—stooping and (B) correct—squatting.

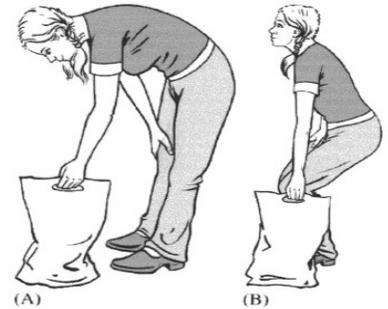


Figure 5 Picking up a bag from the floor: (A) incorrect and (B) correct.

Two other key points which save you from irritating your back are: 1) avoid lifting during the first half hour of the day 2) avoid lifting immediately after prolonged sitting (over 40 minutes) e.g. driving and then lifting bags.

It's finally March . . .

and we have endured one of the snowiest and coldest winters in a very long time. It has produced many painful lower backs from slipping on the ice or shoveling snow or just the inactivity of winter. As we move into spring, it is a perfect time to get some of those kinks out of the back or neck that may have been there for awhile and just aren't going away. Spring is also a great time to consider some **Acupuncture** treatment to help the body rebalance its energy flows or address some painful joints. The combination of the Chiropractic adjustment to restore mobility to joints and acupuncture to restore blocked energy and blood flow can be a powerful boost to your overall health and immune system.

Again, thank you for being our patient!
We appreciate you and look forward to serving you.

David J. Weber, D.C., D.A.B.C.O.