

Safety Bulletin

Solutions to 4 Problems Drivers with Lower Back Pain Face

You're an hour into your drive. Traffic is light. The weather is perfect. But then you start to feel that nagging ache in your lower back.



Unfortunately, back pain is a constant companion for many truck drivers. The results of two different medical studies show that between 50-60% of professional drivers suffer from lower back pain. And it's no wonder; according to WebMD, any job that requires repetitive motions and constant vibrations (think uneven pavement, bumpy roads and potholes) can cause such pain.

Yet you can find solutions. Here are 4 common problems that cause lower back pain, and ways you can help solve them:

Problem #1: Not getting regular exercise

Solution: Try to schedule at least two breaks a day where you can get out of your truck and do some walking or basic stretching exercises. In addition, stretching first thing when you wake up will help get your blood moving and warm up your muscles for the long drive ahead.

Problem #2: Doing a job that requires long hours of sitting, heavy lifting, bending or twisting.

Solution: Let's face it – truck driving is all about long hours of sitting, heavy lifting, bending or twisting. To sit more comfortably, don't keep your wallet or smartphone in your back pocket. To reduce twisting, adjust your mirrors properly. And if you must do some heavy lifting while moving freight, follow proper ways to bend and lift (such as bending at the knees and keeping your back straight).

Problem #3: Poor posture

Solution: Get comfortable in your cab. Make sure your truck's steering wheel is positioned in the center of your body. Don't sit too far away from the steering wheel. Use lumbar (lower back) support devices in the driver's seat. If your cab doesn't have any, then place a small cushion or rolled up towel behind your lower back to keep your ears, shoulders and pelvis in proper alignment.

Problem #4: Obesity

Solution: According to Web MD, being overweight – especially weight you carry around the waist – may put strain on your back. So try some healthier eating options, or sprinkle in more exercise, to try and shed some pounds.