

Proper Lifting Techniques to Help Decrease Chances of Developing a Hernia^{1,2}



Are you a frequent weightlifter? Or, maybe you sporadically lift heavy objects around the house or at work. Chances are, you've heard of proper lifting techniques. But, did you know lifting heavy objects can increase your likelihood of developing a hernia?³ Read the list below to help decrease your chances.

1. Safety First

- Know your end destination and the route you'll take to get there.
- If an object is too heavy to lift safely, ask for assistance.
- If possible, break down into smaller, lighter loads.

2. Keep a Wide Base of Support

- Keep feet shoulder-width apart or wider.
- Keep one foot slightly ahead of the other.

3. Squat Down

- Bend at the hips and knees ONLY.
- If needed, put one knee to the floor and your other knee in front of you, bent at a right angle (half kneeling).

4. Maintain Good Posture

- Look straight ahead and keep your back straight, chest out, and shoulders back.
- Maintain the natural curve in your lower back.
- Don't hold your breath.

5. Slowly Lift

- Let your legs—not your back—do the work as you slowly stand and straighten your hips and knees.
- Do NOT lift from a standing position with your waist bent or knees locked.
- Do NOT twist as you lift.

6. Hold Object Close to Your Body

- Keep items at belly-button level.
- Never lift a heavy object above shoulder level.

7. Move Carefully

- Use your feet to change direction, taking small steps.
- Lead with your hips as you change direction.
- Keep your shoulders in line with your hips as you move.

8. Set Down Carefully

- Squat down with the knees and hips only.
- Avoid turning or twisting your body.

Talk to your doctor if you think you may have a hernia or have a higher chance of getting one in your lifetime. Do you think you may have a hernia? [Find a local surgeon](#) to schedule a hernia consultation.

1. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/multimedia/back-pain/sls-20076866> 2. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=hw206944> 3. <https://www.winfieldhospital.co.uk/news/can-lifting-heavy-objects-cause-a-hernia>