

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Watch Your Back

How much do you know about back injuries and how to prevent them?
Circle true or false for the following statements.

1. **T F** Half of all Workers Compensation claims are related to back pain.
2. **T F** People who sit at desks during the workday are not at risk for back injuries.
3. **T F** Most back pain cases take at least a month for recovery.
4. **T F** The average cost of one case of back pain, in terms of lost work time, is estimated to be \$25,000.
5. **T F** Nine-tenths of American adults will one day have back pain.
6. **T F** A third of all back pain cases can be directly attributed to psychological causes.
7. **T F** As we progress more rapidly into the computer age, the two professions most likely to experience cumulative back strain are graphic designers and legal word processors.
8. **T F** Protective equipment is not needed to prevent back strain.
9. **T F** To prevent back strain, the proper method of lifting is to bend from the knees, not the waist, using thigh muscles as opposed to back muscles.
10. **T F** At a computer station, the height of a monitor in relation to the position of the keyboard can have a substantial effect on the potential for back strain.

ANSWERS

1. **False.** One third of all cases involve back pain or injuries.
2. **False.** Workers who sit at desks need to make sure their chairs, desks and overall work environments are positioned correctly.
3. **False.** Most recover within three weeks.
4. **True.** Medical expenses are not the only expenses related to worker back pain.
5. **True.** This common problem can have devastating results on workers and their quality of life.
6. **False.** Only about 16 percent are from psychological causes. However, one of the most powerful predictors of disability from back pain is psychological distress. To keep your back pain free, reduce your stress level.
7. **True.** These two professions commonly experience long work sessions without rest breaks, hand-me-down office furniture and demanding deadlines.
8. **False.** Specially designed belts can provide crucial support for workers who lift heavy objects or who move objects frequently.
9. **True.** Back injuries can be caused by improper lifting, regardless of the weight of the object or the frequency of the lifting.
10. **True.** Proper height of both the monitor and the keyboard must be adjusted for each individual. (Remember that if you sit at someone else's desk!)