

Back belts

[Business](#), [Work](#)



Back belt, also known as “ back support belt” is a lightweight, elastic belt worn around the waist. It becomes popular due to the medical assumption that it protects the back and many workplaces acquire the use of back belts to avoid injuries among the workers. Sakol Trading and Engineering Co. , Ltd. , a Thailand-based manufacturer of medical equipment like back belts and safety slings, guarantees that the back support belt has the comfort and durability to prevent lower back and abdominal pain and injuries during lifting of heavy loads.

The belt also reminds the wearer to lift properly, offers extra support to a person’s back during prolonged sitting position and repetitive bending. However, these claims are not supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health(NIOSH), the federal institute responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses. According to NIOSH, None of the studies they conducted provides sufficient evidence or data to support the claims that back belt reduces the load force, prevents back and abdominal injuries or stiffens the spine.

Therefore, NIOSH does not recommend the use of back belts to the workers. There are several concerns that the controversial belt creates: it restricts the mobility of a person thus reducing the elasticity of the muscles and tendons; it cause strain on the cardiovascular system and; it creates a false sense of security that may make the wearer to lift excessively heavy load. It also causes muscles to be dependent on external support. Companies should not rely solely on the back belts as a safety program.

They should let their workers undergo trainings about proper lifting and back support. The workers can be allowed to use back belts if they want to since wearing of it is voluntary. However, they should remember that there is no scientific evidence to support that back belts really work. Reference: • Atkinson, Williams. Back Belts: Useful or Not? LP/Gas, Vol. 65, Issue 3, p. 46-47 (March, 2005). Retrieved May 28, 2009 from [http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf? vid= 5&hid= 4&sid= d76b81c5-3c37-451b-9278-484eeeb125cb%40sessionmgr2#db= bth&AN= 16409961](http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=5&hid=4&sid=d76b81c5-3c37-451b-9278-484eeeb125cb%40sessionmgr2#db=bth&AN=16409961)