

## Treatment of Injuries

Muscle fatigue, cramps, and spasms are symptoms that muscles have been overworked. This can lead to the more serious problem of muscle strain or pull. Rest, gentle massage, and the application of cold packs for a short time can give relief.

If the problem is tension, minor stress, or pain in the back, the back-stretching exercises shown may be helpful.

There are times to seek medical attention for sprain, strains, and lower back pain. Some of these are:

- When your employer requests that you seek medical attention.
- When the pain/problem does not show significant improvement by the third day.
- When the problem reoccurs with more frequency or severity.
- When the pain moves to other body locations.
- When a numbness or tingling sensation is felt.
- When respiratory, digestive, or urinary symptoms, or a fever, accompany the pain or problem.

The first step in the treatment of more serious sprains, strains, and back pain is a positive, get-well attitude. Treatment should be under the direction of competent medical professionals, and will usually include ice therapy treatment, gentle massage, stretching exercises, aspirin to relieve pain and reduce inflammation, and return to light-duty work as soon as possible. Such treatment should result in the vast majority of workers returning to full-duty employment in a minimum amount of time.

Bedrest or immobilization of sprained or strained muscles or joints may relieve the pain, but often bedrest results in the weakening of the immobilized muscles and a significantly increased recovery time.

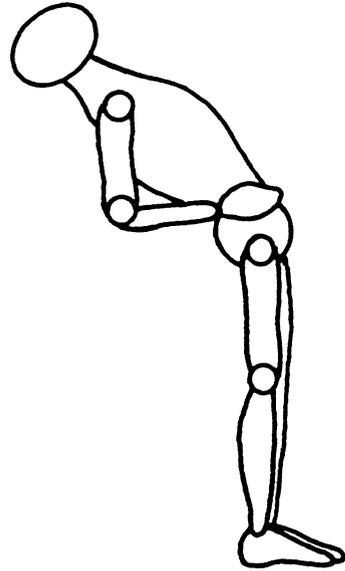
Obviously, serious muscle, ligament, or back injuries may require more extensive treatment, possibly including surgery and long-term rehabilitation.

## Summary

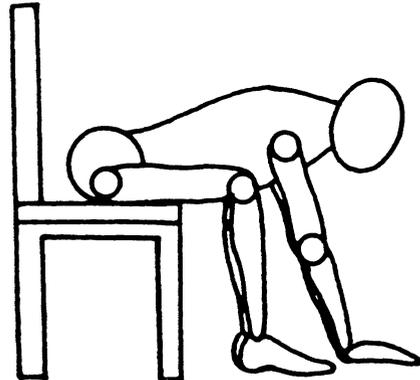
Lifting, pushing, and pulling activities cause serious injuries in Florida agriculture. These injuries are normally sprains and strains to the joints of upper or lower extremities or to the lower back. Degeneration of discs and vertebrae cause much lower back pain. Additional causes of sprains and strains are slips, trips, and falls.

Redesign of the work station and work practices is probably the most effective method of reducing these types of injuries.

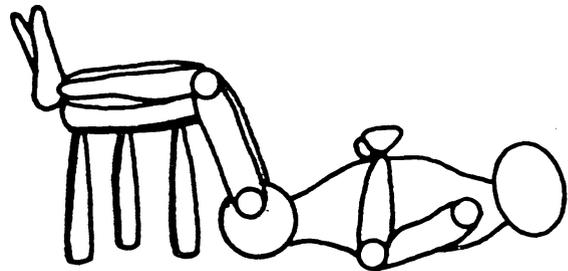
The physical condition of the worker, as a result of proper nutrition, and posture, along with an exercise



- **Back Extension:** Stand in a comfortable position, then place your hands in the lower back area (between your waist and buttocks) and bend backward as far as you can, comfortably. Hold this position for one minute. Relax and repeat three or four times.



- **Lower Back Flexion:** Sit on a straight-back chair and lean forward as far as you can, attempting to rest your chest on your knees. Hold this position for three to five minutes.



- **Back Rest:** Lie flat on your back placing the lower half of your legs (calves) on a chair, sofa or bed. Stay in this position for fifteen minutes.