



FUTURE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES



PREVENTING TOMORROW'S INJURIES TODAY



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Elusive Solution To Back Injuries; Ruined Lives; Wasted \$Billions

Several years ago an Egyptologist (expert at Egyptian history) presented me with the oldest recordable back claim on record: 2,500 years ago a physician treated an unlucky laborer who had hurt his back. It is a fascinating peek into history and shines light onto the fact that the ubiquitous back injury has maimed and ruined lives well beyond the time any of us have been involved with workplace injuries.



Imagine if we could quantify the volume of pain and the amount of money spent on this musculoskeletal plague?

Back injuries have become so "usual" that we, as a society, have *accepted* them as one of the potholes of life that 80% of us will step into at some time. Research into back injuries resides in the domain of medical science where billions of dollars per annum await the next best fix for wrenched backs and bulging disks. Yes, one more symptom of how our society has accepted back injuries as inevitable by aiming research at post injury event "fixes" versus causes and prevention.

The solution to back injuries -- boy oh boy, there are lots of choices. MDs speak of intradiscal pressure; doctors of chiropractic speak of subluxations; Eastern medicine refers to congested chi; and orthopedic surgeons' surgery calendars stay booked for weeks ahead. There are a lot of back fixers out there. It pays well.

I want to know: where were they before you got your back injury? Who do you go see BEFORE you have the life-altering injury? That is the ultimate question.

I have proof in my file cabinet that for at least 2,500 years there has been no wholesale solution to help you, your spouse, your child -- who may be carrying a twenty-pound backpack to school -- or your coworker to causatively PREVENT the life-changing back injury.

When F.I.T. embarked upon the quest to stop work-related back injuries almost two decades ago, we weren't daunted by Risk Managers' and Safety Directors' stories that *nothing* has ever worked to prevent back claims or tales that employees don't listen. Nor were we discouraged by workers' compensation, a whole industry, 100% focused on *not* preventing these profit draining, time wasting, and eye bulging painful injuries, but on mitigating their liabilities only after the horse has left the barn!

We knew something was wrong when the common refrain from management was, "Our employees don't listen."

Something was amiss because there isn't one sane human being that would look forward to having back pain. If you polled employees and asked if they would be interested in preventing life-altering pain there wouldn't be a lot of equivocal head scratching, stammering, or indecision. Yet I was being told that employees wouldn't pay attention or buy-in to learning how to avoid job-threatening, jaw-clenching pain.

We knew there was a solution. There had to be. The human body is just too incredible to have such a serious defect as a frail spine. However the solution did not reside exclusively in the sciences of medicine, anatomy, biomechanics, ergonomics and kinesiology. The answer to preventing workplace back injuries also involved the "arts."

Your employees are starving to know how to prevent strain/strain injuries to themselves and their families. Happily, the easiest people to train on how to prevent back injuries are the "aging" workforce. What fifty-year-old enjoys new pains or a body that will no longer allow them to do activities they have enjoyed since childhood?

The results speak for themselves:

- 77% reduction in workers' compensation costs
- Workers' compensation budget plummeting from \$1.4 million to \$80,000 in two years
- Hospital sees cost of sprain/strains drop by over 60%
- 20,000 employees trained to a result of a 63% reduction in back and neck injuries
- Unions paying money out of their own safety budget to have their members helped

These statistics and stories are from clients that believed us when we told them that back injuries and other sprain/strains were now preventable. They agreed that the old way of reacting only after an injury occurred was no longer affordable.

The answer to how to prevent back injuries was worked out after twenty years of research, development and training hundreds of thousands of employees. We involved brilliant minds, well acquainted with anatomy, biomechanics, ergonomics, the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders, and stretching.

However, I don't believe there was any new startling discovery made in this arena. In other words, the science of lifting, bending, sitting/typing, pushing, pulling had been discovered and agreed upon years ago.

The key that unlocked the solution to preventing back claims was, "How do you get employees to listen" and to embrace these scientific principles?

How can we get nurses, firefighters, policemen, factory workers, warehouse personnel, office workers, truck drivers, bus drivers, custodians, front-end cashiers, trades people, lab workers, librarians, union and non-union employees to lower their personal barriers to learning to accept help and to decide to change their physical behaviors for their own well-being?

Hasn't this been the problem? You want to help your employees but they rejected it by not listening? We knew our Research & Development had to include the art of getting employees to bring their minds into the training rooms with their bodies! A new training methodology had to be developed as a companion to the physical sciences. We call it "bionomics®": "how to manage the body."

The R&D is done. The results are in from across the U.S. and Canada. Back injuries can be prevented whether one is "aging" or in junior high.

We found out that almost all employees are extremely hungry to learn how to be pain free. Have you ever delivered training to employees and heard complaints that the training was too short????!!

Have you ever completed trainings and received thank you notes from your employees for providing it?

Employees' acceptance is the first indicator that injuries will go down. Without the initial buy-in from employees there is virtually no chance for a significant return on the investment.

The timing couldn't be better for you. A new economy now prevails. Lay-offs are up and profits are down. Workers' comp costs must be attacked without lethargy or tacit acceptance that nothing can be done about it.

The days of unpreventable back claims are now over. We have been busy preparing to deliver to you. There are now several hundred certified F.I.T. Injury Prevention Specialists across North America ready to change the lives of your employees and to turn your workers' compensation expenses into profits. It is a win/win.

Don't forget to attend one of the trainings yourself. Life is much more fun when you are pain free. You just need to learn how -- BEFORE that back injury happens.

Dennis Downing, President
Future Industrial Technologies

Check out our new blog: www.backsafe.wordpress.com. Any injury prevention/safety type topics you'd like to see covered there? Please let us know. We love suggestions and feedback.

We look forward to helping you to "Prevent Tomorrow's Injuries Today," right now!

We're TWITTERing! Keep current on the latest in injury prevention by following us. Find "backsafe" at www.twitter.com/backsafe! Find us on Facebook too!

This article may be reprinted in its entirety provided that the following resource is left intact:

Dennis Downing is the founder and President of Future Industrial Technologies, Inc., a nationwide Industrial Injury Prevention Training Company. It specializes in improving conditions at work and in life by utilizing the proprietary injury prevention programs, BACKSAFE® and SITTINGSAFE®, that have proven to be highly successful at reducing workers comp costs within companies of all sizes and descriptions.

Future Industrial Technologies, Inc.
4930 Cervato Way
Santa Barbara, CA 93111
Call Toll Free: 1 (800) 775-2225
Tel: (805) 967-2485
Fax: (805) 967-2487
Email: info@backsafe.com
<http://www.backsafe.com>