1. Frequent causes of back pain:
   ⇒ Standing or sitting too long, especially without changing position
   ⇒ Lifting or carrying something that is too heavy and/or awkward
   ⇒ Lifting things using an incorrect technique, with your back in the wrong position
   ⇒ Sleeping in the wrong position or on a bad mattress

2. Several symptoms can warn you that your back is injured. See a doctor if you notice:
   ⇒ Sore or stiff muscles
   ⇒ Numbness
   ⇒ Tingling or burning sensations
   ⇒ Not being able to move your head, arms or legs as much as you used to

3. To review how to lift and carry things, check the SafeTips on Lifting and Carrying Objects.

4. The key word for work shoes: practical. They should be comfortable, stable and supportive. If you have to stand on steel or concrete, consider using a cushioned insole or getting rubber and/or padded matting to stand on.

5. Start a program of exercise and stretching to strengthen you back and to keep you limber. As few as a half-dozen exercises and an investment of just 10 minutes a day can work wonders.