

SMART

moves

for mum



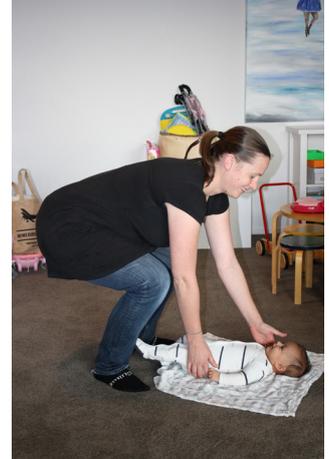
**How to move to be a
Physically Happy Mum**

To be a great mum you need to look after yourself first.

As a mum the physical demands on your body are extraordinary. Not only do you carry and deliver a child but the energy and strength required to raise that little person is immense.

Not moving your body correctly can cause aches, pains and injury. In the western world we've forgotten how to use our bodies properly. Many of our jobs are sedentary or repetitive - we need to retrain our bodies to move properly. Motherhood provides a perfect opportunity to do this and the rewards are great.

We've put together this booklet to help you make your job as a mum a bit easier by giving you the tools to get the most out of your body and avoid injury. From lifting prams, car seats and groceries, to picking up toys and multi-tasking with baby on your hip, we've got you covered!



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Balancing act

Being a mum is a huge balancing act with kids, work and the day-to-day of life. Our intention isn't to add to your load but to show you how to move with balance – so you can keep juggling without getting injured.

As a mum there are many tasks that require you to lean forward – changing your little one's nappy, putting them into a pram, picking up toys, loading a dishwasher or getting groceries out of the boot of the car. You need to balance your weight correctly when you lean forward to protect your back and knees. A simple way to think about how to move with balance is to remember that when something goes forwards something needs to go backwards. When you are bending forward you need to move at your hips first so your butt goes behind you and the weight goes into your heels. The further you bend forward the further your butt goes behind you. Many people bend with their knees forward - weight goes onto the toes - their butt is no longer behind them. This creates an imbalanced posture and can cause an injury. Bend with balance - keep moving your butt backwards as you bend forward.

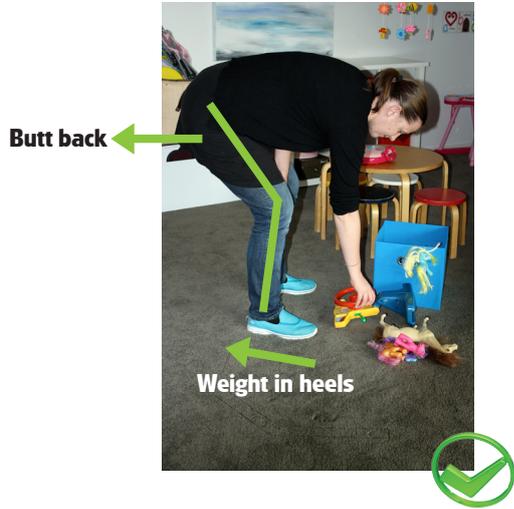


To move with balance:

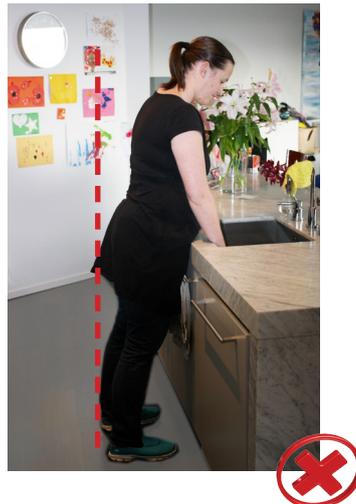
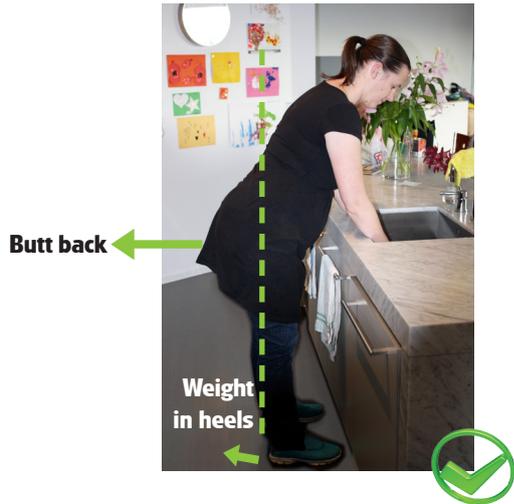
- move at hips
- butt back
- weight in heels..

Balance examples

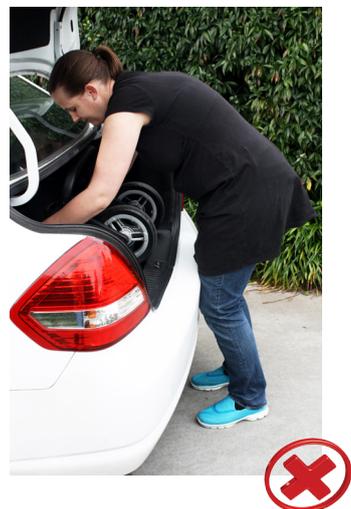
Picking up toys



Washing dishes



Stroller out of boot



Round the twist

Kids and the house work can drive you round the twist! Moving correctly when you actually twist will protect your back and knees...it won't help with the other stuff though...

Twisting in and out of your car to put your baby into its seat can lead to some serious back pain and can cause knee and shoulder injuries. Problems occur if you twist through your lower back. Keeping your feet planted while your upper body moves will put the twist through your lower back. To twist safely and protect your back you need to move your feet as your upper body moves. A handy phrase to remember is 'Your toes follow your nose'.



To avoid twisting:

- move your feet
- your toes follow your nose.

Twisting examples

Moving baby capsule



Hanging out clothes



Toes in direction of nose

On your shoulders

We understand that you can feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders. That's not surprising. Breastfeeding, lifting baby paraphernalia, hanging washing and cleaning – a mum's shoulders really do shoulder it all. We have a few tips to help you use your shoulders properly without causing strain or pain.

If you don't position your shoulders correctly when you move you risk neck, shoulder and back pain. To use your shoulders safely and to have more strength you should always have your thumbs up and elbow tips down in a Fish Wing position. The Fish Wing position gives you power from your abdominal muscles and protects your smaller neck and shoulder muscles. The risk of injury comes when you have your thumbs facing down and your elbow tips out to the side in a Chicken Wing position. This position makes you weaker and puts tension on your neck, shoulders, arms and back. The further you get away from your body in this position the weaker you are and the greater the risk of injury.



To use your shoulders safely:

- elbow tips down in a Fish Wing
- thumbs up.

Shoulder examples

Hanging out clothes

Thumbs upward

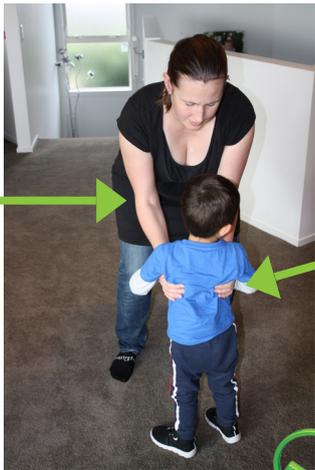


Fish Wing, elbows point down

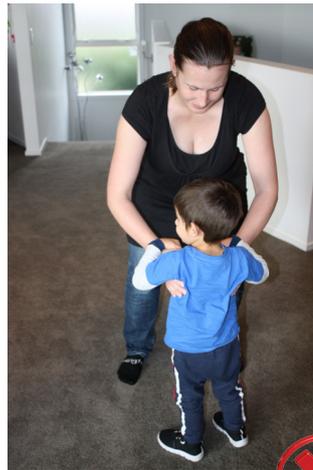


Picking up toddler

Fish Wing, elbows point down



Thumbs upward



Pushing stroller

Fish Wing and Elbows point down



Thumbs upwards



Uplifting

Being a mum has its ups and downs and sometimes you can do with a little pick-me-up. Just like doing something uplifting to improve your mental wellbeing is important – using your body correctly when you are actually lifting is important to prevent physical injuries.

Safe lifting is quite simple. Just lift like a weight lifter to protect your back, neck and knees.

Move at your hips with butt back and weight in your heels. Keep your chest upwards to lock your back in and breathe out for power.

Don't look down when you lift, as this forces the weight forward and you won't be able to use your legs and power muscles. Instead you will be forced to use your back and arms and risk injuring yourself.

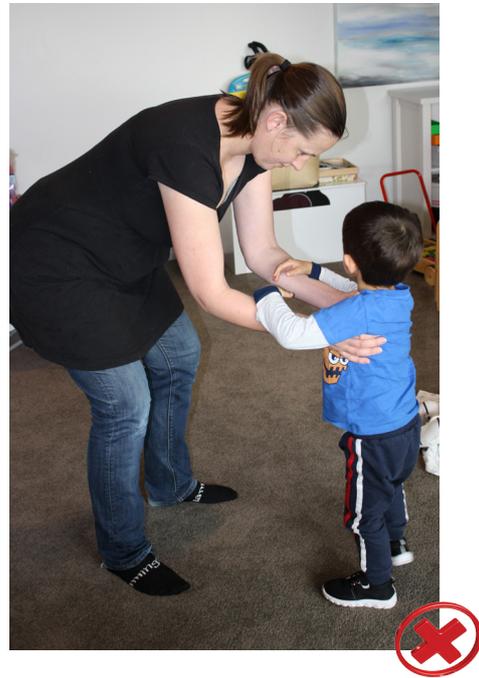


Lift like a weight lifter:

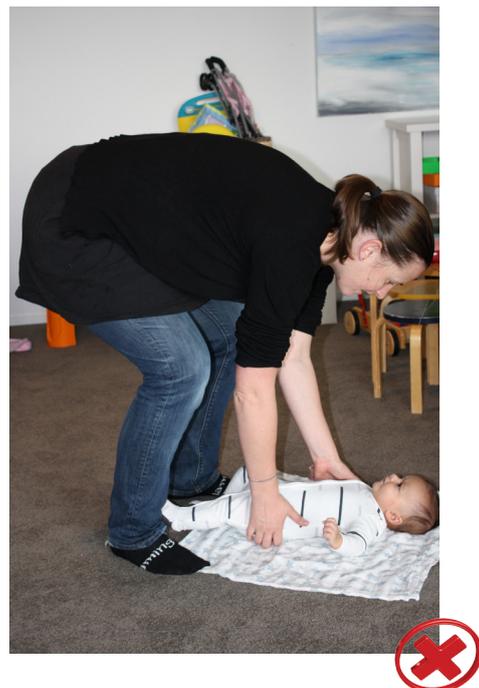
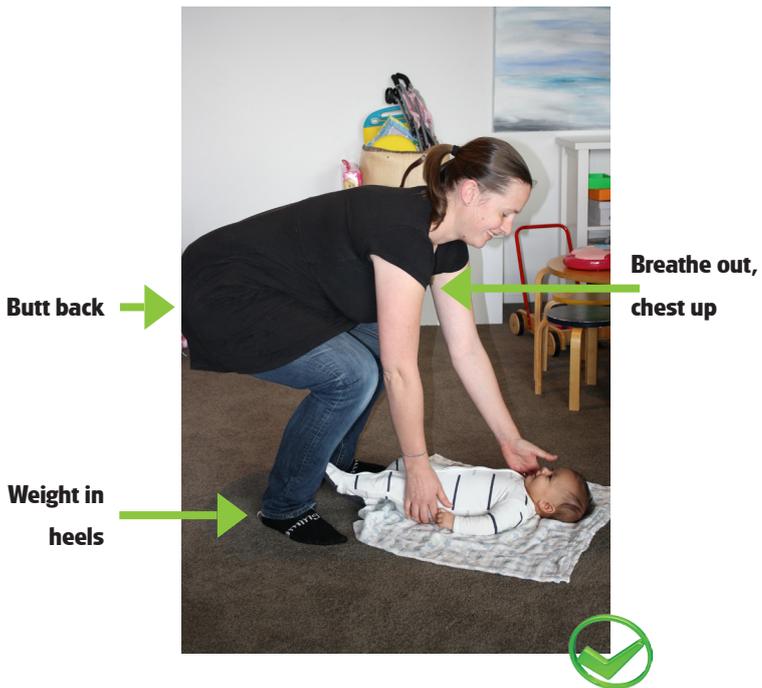
- **butt back**
- **weight in heels**
- **chest up**
- **breathe out.**

Lifting examples

Lifting child



Lifting baby



Caring hands

A mum's hands are beautiful tools – they love, care, serve, comfort and protect. From the finest of tasks to some serious heavy duty lifting – hands are designed to help you do it all. We show you how to get the most out of your hands whether you need power or fine-motor skills.

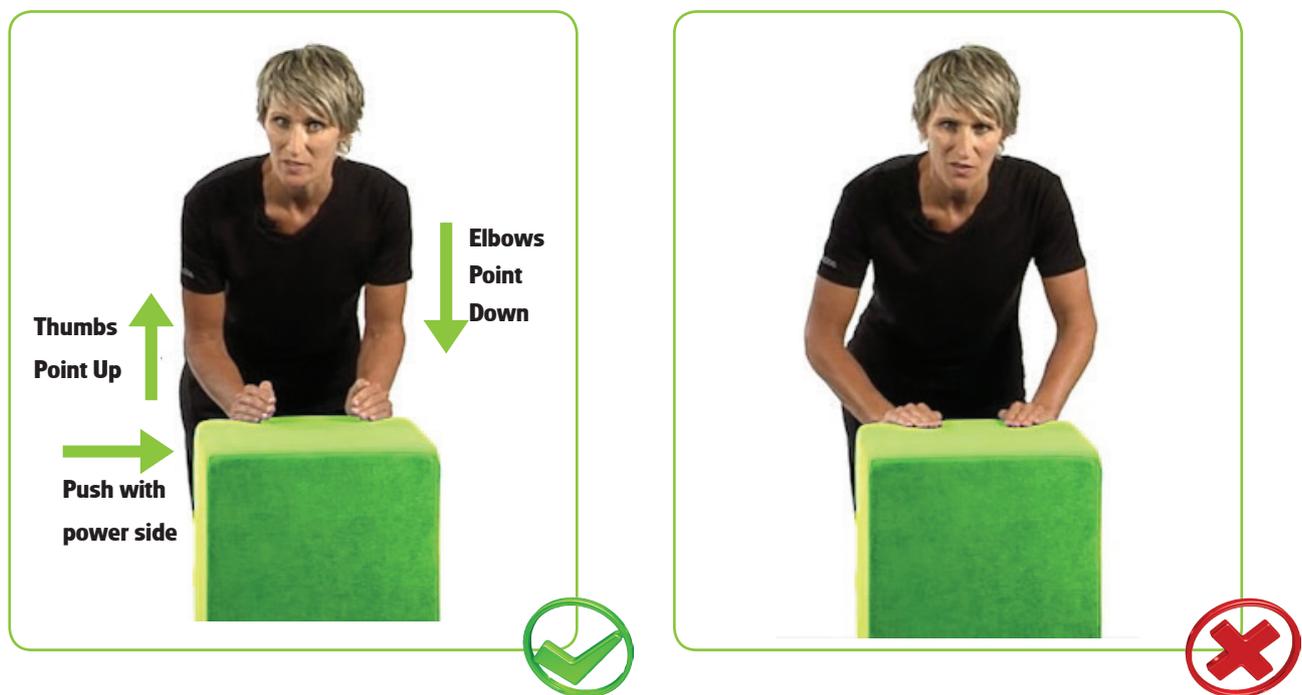
Hands allow us to grip, push, carry, manoeuvre and so much more. Using your hands ineffectively can contribute to wrist, arm, neck and back pain. Your power comes from the little pinky side of your hand and fingers. Fine control comes from your index side of your hand and fingers.

What most of us do is use our whole hand for both power and fine control and this can create problems.

With any pushing action such as pushing strollers or moving furniture put the pressure on the power side of your hand. Take the pressure off the index finger and thumb side of your hand.

With any gripping action such as carrying grocery bags, car seats or laundry hampers lead the grip with your pinky finger. Take the load off your index finger.

With any carrying action such as holding your toddler or carrying boxes take the load on the power side of your hand. Take the pressure off the index finger and thumb side of your hand.



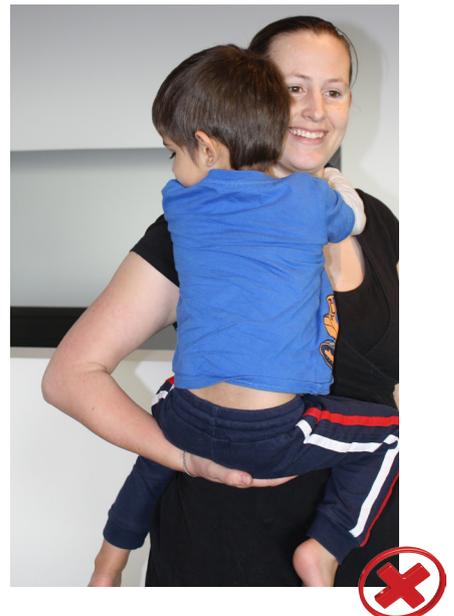
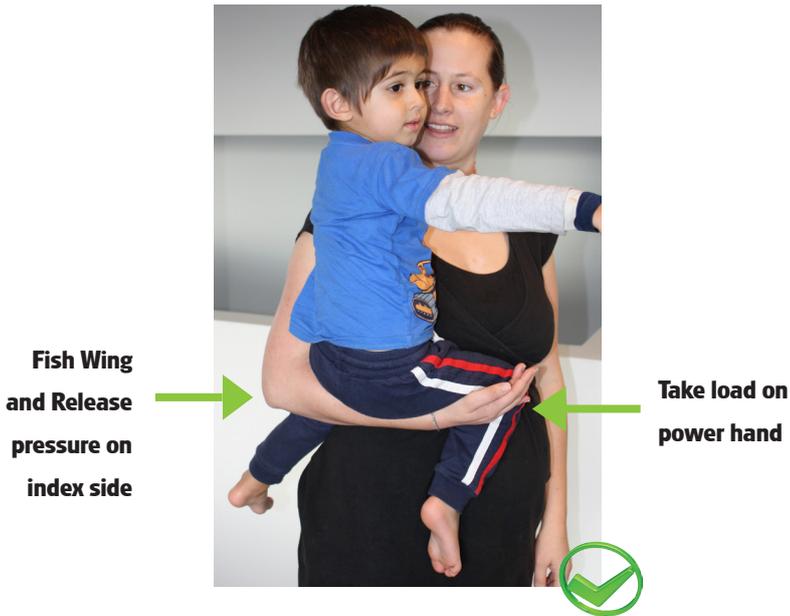
To increase your power use the power of your hand for pushing, gripping and carrying.

Hand examples

Carrying groceries



Carrying toddler



Pushing stroller



Just breathe

When life gets overwhelming taking a few deep breaths can do wonders for your mind. Knowing when to breathe when you move will do wonders for your physical wellbeing.

A mum's job is physically demanding. It requires strength to lift, push and clean. Breathing out is not only great for stress relief but it gives us enormous physical power and reduces strain on the body. It's really common for us to hold our breath when doing heavy work. This makes you weaker and puts strain on your neck and back – it can also contribute to hernias. Remember to breathe out for power when doing heavy activities.

Here are some activities where breathing out for power is important in your world.

Lifting toddler



Standing up with baby



Lifting from ground



Lifting from portacot



Stretch it out

Putting your feet up is a great way to get some 'me' time. Another way to care for yourself is to include a few stretches into your daily routine. This will keep your muscles supple and help to prevent injuries.

Breathing examples

Here are a few stretches you can do to help undo the damage from doing repetitive tasks.