



DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE THE RIGHT BACKPACK?

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THE FACTS ABOUT CARRYING BACKPACKS

Forty million teenagers carry a backpack to school. More and more doctors are seeing children for back pain and injuries and now that children are back in school, thousands of elementary, secondary and high school students are heading to their classes with overstuffed backpacks slung over their shoulders. While carrying a backpack to school every morning may seem harmless enough, it can cause painful back and neck problems and injuries for students who don't pack or carry their backpack's properly. It can also lead to long-term medical problems.

THE FACTS:

- Medical professionals advise that individuals carry no more than 10-15% of their body weight on their backs.

Example: A child weighing:

- 50 lbs should carry no more than 7.5 lbs
- 80 lbs should carry no more than 12 lbs
- 100 lbs should carry no more than 15 lbs
- 130 lbs should carry no more than 19.5 lbs
- 150 lbs should carry no more than 22.5 lbs

Many children are carrying up to 40 lbs and are hurting themselves.

- Today's heavy loads are causing injuries that last a lifetime.

If children are feeling headaches, neck aches, bad posture, achy and strained muscles, low back pain, muscle spasms, tingling hands, and increased scoliosis complications, they are carrying too much weight improperly.

TIPS ON WEARING YOUR BACKPACK PROPERLY

- **Distribute the weight evenly:**
Putting the heavier items on the bottom will help to keep the weight off of your shoulders and maintain better posture.
- **Wear both shoulder straps unless your pack is an AirPacks which is designed for use on one shoulder:**
Lugging a heavy backpack using one strap can shift the weight to one side which can lead to neck and muscle spasms, low back pain and walking improperly.
- **Have padded or air-filled straps:**
Non-padded will dig into your shoulders and cause pain and injury.
- **Use a waistbelt unless you are wearing an AirPacks bag.**
- **Lift it right:**
Bend your knees when you pick up your heavy backpack.
- **TAKE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED TO SCHOOL!**