

THE BASICS 540.985.0500

Back to Basics Physical Therapy 1015 First Street SW, Roanoke, VA 24016

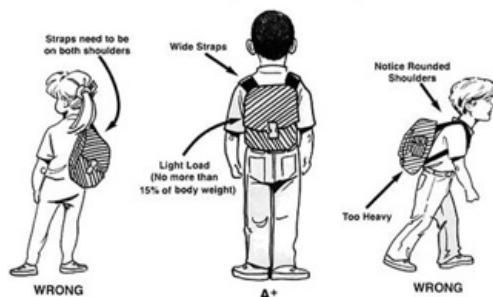
» 6 Steps To Backpack Safety For Kids

As children head back to school in September, a disturbing new trend is emerging. Young children are suffering from back pain much sooner than generations before them. A major contributing factor seems to be a heavy backpack. Most parents (and children) are unaware of the potential injury that heavy backpacks can cause.

A recent news release by the American Physical Therapy Association in April 2009 revealed that more than 50 percent of children surveyed carry backpacks that are too heavy.

If a backpack is stuffed with heavy books and/or worn incorrectly, the bio-mechanical pressure on the spine increases dramatically. As a result, your child may lean forward to compensate. This can cause shoulder, neck, or back pain.

Is Your Child's Backpack Making The Grade?



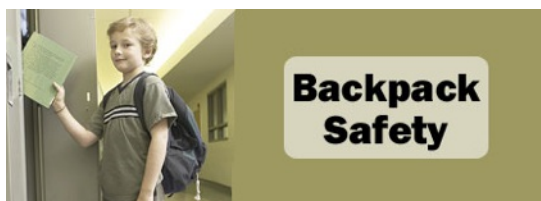
To help your child's back, here's what you can do:

1. **Pack smart.** Make sure that your child gets in the habit of cleaning out their bag daily, leaving things that aren't needed at home or in the locker.
2. **Distribute weight evenly.** Teach your child to wear both straps, not just one. This helps to distribute the weight evenly.
3. **Pay attention to your child's posture.** If your child is slouching or leaning over to one side, chances are that the backpack is too heavy. If there are any signs of pain, tingling, or numbness consult your doctor or physical therapist immediately.
4. **Get the "right" backpack.** Consider getting a backpack with multiple compartments to keep the weight more evenly distributed. Make sure there are 2 wide and well-padded straps that add comfort to the shoulder. If the bag has one strap, the weight distribution is uneven, causing the child to lean forward or to the side. Also, tighten the straps so the backpack is close to the body and rests in the middle of the back, not at the buttocks.
5. **Lift the backpack properly.** Teach your child how to lift the backpack correctly by bending at the knees and lifting with both hands before putting it on.
6. **Reduce the load.** Doctors and physical therapists strongly recommend children carry bags that are no more than 10-15% of their body weight. However, less is always better. This means that if your child weighs 100 lbs, the backpack should weigh no more than 15 lbs to avoid injury.

Contact us to learn more about the correct posture and movement patterns for children in your household.

» Backpack Safety

Backpacks come in all shapes, sizes, and colors and they can be a lot of fun when picking out.



Compared to purses, totes, and laptop bags, backpacks are better as they use the strongest muscles of the body (the back and abdominals) to support the weight of the bag.

With **both** straps being used, the weight of the bag is evenly distributed across the body, unlike a heavy purse or bag on one side.

Backpacks are very helpful, but they can also strain your child's muscles and joints and may lead to back pain if they are too heavy.

If you are not sure if your child is wearing his/her backpack the "right" way, call us today and we'll teach your child the right posture and exercises for a healthy back.

» Tell Your Kids You Have Their Backs, And So Do We!

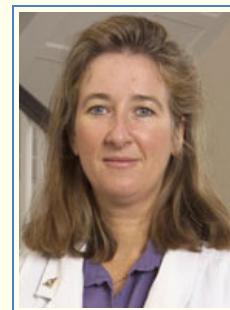


Your child does not have to suffer from shoulder, neck, or back pain due to carrying or lifting a heavy backpack.

If your child experiences any pain or discomfort resulting from backpack use, call us today.

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Francine Noel-Ford, DPT

Back to Basics Family Physical Therapy

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Patient Testimonial

My treatments were just what I needed. I was better in just 9 treatments. I was very impressed to be feeling better in such a short period. Margaret B.

Do you need Physical Therapy?

If you have any of the following conditions we can help!

Tendonitis/ Bursitis
Sprain/ Strain
Jaw, Neck, or Back Pain
Tension Headache
Pelvic Pain/ Incontinence
Lymphedema
Trigger Points

Pre/ Post Surgical Protocols

Most Insurances Accepted!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are now offering Pre/ Post Natal, Osteoporosis, Pilates and Yoga Classes. Please call 540.985.0500 to register.

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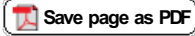
We will conduct a thorough examination and help avoid discomfort or injury. We will also prescribe the best, most efficient exercises to help address any impairment and help your children (and you) to develop stronger muscles, improve posture, and return to normal, pain-free activities. Thank you for reading. **We look forward to working with you.**

friend and receive a free 30 min. massage!

(Must be a previous patient)



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Back to Basics Family Physical Therapy 1015 First Street SW Suite 2 Roanoke Virginia 24016 Phone: 540.985.0500

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