



Backpack Safety

Improper use of backpacks by students may be harmful and may cause orthopedic injuries to growing and developing bodies. Here are some guidelines for safe backpack use:

- Match the backpack to the size of the student-not too long or too short.
- Look for a lightweight style with a padded back, waist strap and 2 wide, padded shoulders.
- The backpack should rest evenly in the middle of the back.
- Use of both shoulder straps is essential.
- Use good body mechanics when lifting your backpack-bend at the knees and use your legs to lift, one shoulder at a time.
- Straps should be tight enough to insure that the backpack is close to the body.
- Distribute objects evenly within the backpack
- A backpack should weigh no more than 15% of your body weight.
- Use all compartments and pack the heaviest books or objects close to the back with the center of gravity near the hips.
- Lighten the load- only carry books and material that your child will need for homework.

Following these easy steps will promote a healthy back and decrease student complaints of neck and shoulder pain.

