

Health Notes

Watch Those Backpacks!

by Craft Chiropractic Associates, PC

☛ Make sure your child's backpack weighs no more than 5 to 10 percent of his or her body weight. A heavier backpack will cause your child to bend forward in an attempt to support the weight on his or her back, rather than on the shoulders, by the straps.

☛ The backpack should never hang more than four inches below the waistline. A backpack that hangs too low increases the weight on the shoulders, causing your child to lean forward when walking.

☛ Bigger is not necessarily better. The more room there is in a backpack, the more your child will carry – and the heavier the backpack will be.

☛ A backpack with individualized compartments helps in positioning the contents most effectively. Make sure that pointy or bulky objects are packed away from the area that will rest on your child's back.

☛ Urge your child to wear both shoulder straps. Lugging the backpack around by one strap can dig into your child's shoulder.

☛ Wide, padded straps are very important. Non-padded straps are uncomfortable and can dig into your child's shoulder.

☛ The shoulder straps should be adjustable so the backpack can be fitted to your child's body. Straps that are too loose can cause the backpack to dangle uncomfortably and cause spinal problems.

☛ If the backpack is still too heavy, talk to your child's teacher. Ask if your child could leave the heaviest books at school and bring home only lighter hand-out materials or workbooks. ☆

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