

# Backpacks: the real enemy

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Your shoulders ache. You wipe off the beads of sweat that cover your neck. Only 10 more feet and you are there. You tighten the straps on the bursting bubble of lead that is restricting your movement and push forward. Finally, you crawl on your hands and feet and drag your lifeless struggling body in the classroom.

Have you ever had to bear the weight of a heavy backpack? Chances are that you have. This tragedy has affected millions of students in America. Teens must protect their backs by learning about the dangers of weighty bags, and learn beneficial alternatives. Backpacks are incredibly dangerous, have horrific effects, and put students at more of a risk to injure their spines and backs. You look to your left and then to your right at the hunched over creatures dragging their gimpy legs behind them. With every peer you witness as you walk down the hallway looking like Quasimodo it is obvious there is a crisis occurring.

Dr. Rock Positano has said, " Excessive loads can create injury to the lumbar discs". They also include that " 10, 062 backpack related injuries among children 5 to 14 were recorded in 1998 emergency room alone" Injuries caused by unequal weight distribution may pose grievances that physically and psychologically can last a lifetime. Emergency rooms continue to receive more patients related to heavy backpacks. A " CPSC study finds that backpack related injuries have increased 256 percent since 1996" concludes Maryellen Cicione.

By following these guidelines, you will easily please your parents and back. Many doctors have pinpointed possible causes of pain and have researched

favorable hints to help. Medical professionals say not to carry backpacks that “ weigh more than 10 to 15 percent of their bodyweight. I have even dealt with the massive weight my back must support. I have had reddened shoulders that appear to look like sunburn and my bag has weighed up to 40 pounds.

Being in high school, it has benefited me to carry a backpack but there are times I have three extra heavy textbooks in my bag due to advance classes. In addition to that load, I must carry my mandatory school supplies. As well as lessening the load, you should bend your knees when lifting your bag. They also say wearing straps on both shoulders help to distribute the weight. In addition, it helps to exercise and stretch your back muscles as often as possible. All of these suggestions, when used properly, should help prevent and cause fewer mishaps.

To ensure your child’s safety, buying the perfect book bag is essential. Backpacks with wide and well-padded straps create more comfort and less pain. In addition, backpacks with multiple storage compartments and pockets help reduce the stress on your shoulders redistributing the weight being carried using your upper body rather than targeting one spot. Brands recommended are DC, Jan Sport, North Face, etc. Hip straps, are said, when used they bare more weight taking even more pressure off your back. In addition, wheeled book bags that children can pull also are recommended.

Even though medical professionals can recommend brands, Chiropractors and orthopedic doctors are more useful; however, some may not available to you. Learning the negative medical effects of wearing heavy backpacks,

ways to help prevent injuries and having a guide to help you pick out the perfect book bag in return allows you to see the dangers of this “ useful” transportation device for your school supplies. No longer will you see the Hunchback of Notre Dame walking the halls. I know we students in America will decrease our visits to the chiropractor and any other medical professionals by following these rules. Is it not worth the lesser fee to keep you injury free and save your mother’s bigger paycheck for something other than medical bills? Anytime you feel a pain in your back think of how a bad back can limit your favorite activities and hobbies.