

Healthy Tips To Look & Feel Your Best

# Backpack Safety

- Make sure your backpack weighs no more than 5 to 10 percent of your body weight. A heavier backpack will cause you to bend forward in an attempt to support the weight on your 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 you to lean forward when walking.
- 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 back.
- Bigger is not necessarily better. The more room there is in a backpack, the more you will carry and the heavier the backpack will be.
- Wear both shoulder straps. Lugging the backpack around by one strap can cause the disproportionate shift of weight to one side, leading to neck and muscle spasms, as well as low-back pain.
- Wide, padded straps are very important. Non-padded straps are uncomfortable, and can dig into your shoulders.
- The shoulder straps should be adjustable so the backpack can be fitted to your body. Straps that are too loose can cause the backpack to dangle uncomfortably and cause spinal misalignment and pain.

\*Source-American Chiropractic Association (ACA)

