



Better Back Backpack Guide



One of the most common causes of neck and back pain in children is poor backpack hygiene. When backpacks are worn incorrectly, are too bulky, or have too much weight they increase stress to the Posture System.

Posture is the structural framework of your body. Bones, muscles, joints, and connective tissues make up the Posture System to hold your body upright against gravity, preventing postural collapse.

Stress to the Posture System results in Postural Distortion Patterns, impacting your child's ability to live healthy and pain free.

Most Common Postural Distortion Patterns:

» **Forward Head Posture:** The head is forward from looking down. You can see this by evaluating if your child's ears are in front of their shoulders. This can also be referred to as "Tech Neck Posture" because it is commonly due to looking down at devices.



» **Postural Hyperkyphosis:** C-Shaped spinal curve of the mid-back. You can tell your child has this Postural Distortion Pattern if their shoulders are rounded and their chest drops forward.

» **Hip Unevening:** One hip is higher than the other. This is common when your child shifts their weight to one side or the other, especially if their backpack is over only one shoulder. The compensation of uneven distribution leads to misaligned hips.

» **Foot Pronation:** Instead of the feet pointing straight forward, they point outwards.



Better Back Backpack Tips:

Prevent neck and back pain this school year with Better Backpack Posture. Implement these tips to prevent postural distortion patterns and live pain free.

1. Do not carry a backpack that is more than 10% of your child's bodyweight
2. Pack the heaviest items closest to your back (such as large textbooks)
3. Wear the backpack over both shoulders
4. Ensure the straps are even length on both sides and don't let the backpack hang too low
5. Stand up straight and evenly distribute your weight over both feet while wearing the backpack
6. Don't slouch your shoulders forward or look down with your head forward while wearing a backpack (such as when texting)
7. Don't lean back or forward to support the weight of the backpack, stay centered
8. Avoid carrying too many items to and from school each day
9. Leave extra items in your locker or desk to lighten the load of the backpack
10. Keep your body in proper alignment with your head and shoulders pulled back, your ears aligned over your shoulders, your shoulders aligned over your hips, your hips aligned over your knees, and your knees aligned over your ankles, with your feet pointed forward, and your weight distributed evenly over both feet.

