



## Kids Backpacks and Back Pain

September 2009

Backpacks are frequently a necessary item for carrying school supplies as well as being a fashion accessory for today's school children. They are also a frequent contributor to back pain in kids, and can lead to a life time of back problems. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission a 300 per cent increase in backpack related injuries has occurred since 1996.

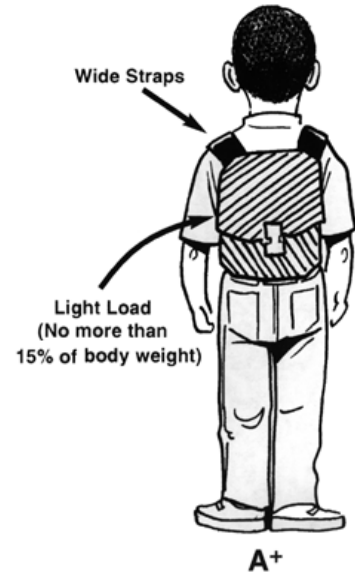
Backpacks can contribute to pain when they are overloaded, packed incorrectly or worn improperly. The maximum weight carried in a pack should be no more than 15 per cent of the child's body weight. For smaller children this may be only a few large text books. Improperly distributed loads can also increase chances for injury. Many kids hastily stuff the packs increasing load on the spine. Wearing the pack over one shoulder unevenly distributes forces on the back.

When choosing a backpack a good design is important. Padded shoulder straps and a waist belt will distribute forces more appropriately. Multiple compartments allow smaller items to be found easier and allows better packing. Proper sizing is also important in distributing forces correctly.

When wearing a pack loading it correctly is important. Heavier items such as large books should be closest to the back and weights should be distributed evenly side to side. Both shoulder straps should be worn at all times along with a waist belt. These straps should be adjusted so they are snug but not overly tight. When standing for long periods taking the backpack off will relieve forces from the spine.

Taking time to get a proper backpack for your kids and teaching them how to use it can help them avoid a lifetime of back pain.

**Call 949-9966 for a free screening**



## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Causes and Treatments

### Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

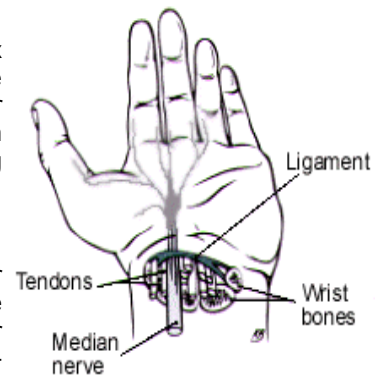
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome or CTS is an increasingly common problem affecting the wrists and hands. This problem results in 2 million physician visits and 260,000 surgeries per year, affecting women 3 times more often than men. CTS is frequently caused by repetitive activities such as computer and tool work, but can be aggravated by sleep postures and daily household activities. If not properly treated, CTS can lead to nerve damage and permanent disability.

### What Are the Symptoms of CTS?

CTS results in pain, numbness, and tingling in the hand and fingers, particularly the index and middle fingers. It is caused by decreased space in the carpal tunnel in the wrist, where the median nerve runs into the hand. This decreased space can result from inflammation or scar tissue formation in the tunnel. The nerve then becomes compressed and results in pain and abnormal sensation. Common activities which can aggravate CTS are use of vibrating tools, computer work, bicycling, knitting, and house cleaning.

### Treatment of CTS

The most severe cases of CTS may require surgical intervention. Prior to surgery, however many options are available. Reducing the stress on the wrist is important. This can be done by maintaining the wrist in neutral posture while using your hands. That is keeping, your hands in line with your forearms and not bent up or down. Splinting can help with this, especially if you are having problems at night. Ergonomic evaluation of a work site can also be beneficial to put your body in the most optimum position. Decreasing repetitive hand movements that are forceful, awkward, or involve grasping and pinching will significantly decrease stresses on the wrist.



**Anatomy of the hand**

### **Inside this issue:**

- Kids Backpacks and Back Pain PG 1
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome PG 1
- Free Monthly Laser Clinic PG 1
- Neck Pain PG 2
- Win a FREE massage! PG 2

### **FREE LASER CLINIC HELD ON THE LAST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH!!!**

Do you have pain and inflammation and would like to reduce it, but you don't know how? Our FREE laser clinic may be just the answer for you. ML 830 Laser is a revolutionary new therapy. The Healing power of light relieves acute and chronic pain, reduces inflammation, helps generate new cells and tissue, promotes faster wound healing, and much more.

This laser is used to treat but not limited to: Arthritis, Back/Neck Pain, Carpal Tunnel, Heel Spurs, Migraines, Tendonitis, Sprains/Strains and Swelling.

## Inside Story Headline

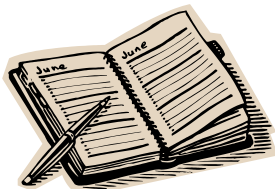


Caption describing picture or graphic.

## Inside Story Headline

**“To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”**

## Inside Story Headline



Caption describing picture or graphic.

This story can fit 75-125 words.

Selecting pictures or graphics is an important part of adding content to your newsletter.

Think about your article and ask yourself if the picture supports or enhances the message you're trying to convey. Avoid selecting images

that appear to be out of context.

Microsoft Publisher includes thousands of clip art images from which you can choose and import into your newsletter. There are also several tools you can use to draw shapes and symbols.

Once you have chosen an image, place it close to

the article. Be sure to place the caption of the image near the image.

### Inside Story Headline

This story can fit 150-200 words.

One benefit of using your newsletter as a promotional tool is that you can reuse content from other marketing materials, such as press releases, market studies, and reports.

While your main goal of distributing a newsletter might be to sell your product or service, the key to a successful newsletter is making it useful to your

readers.

A great way to add useful content to your newsletter is to develop and write your own articles, or include a calendar of upcoming events or a special offer that promotes a new product.

You can also research articles or find "filler" articles by accessing the World Wide Web. You can write about a variety of topics but try to keep

your articles short.

Much of the content you put in your newsletter can also be used for your Web site. Microsoft Publisher offers a simple way to convert your newsletter to a Web publication. So, when you're finished writing your newsletter, convert it to a Web site and post it.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

### Inside Story Headline

This story can fit 100-150 words.

The subject matter that appears in newsletters is virtually endless. You can include stories that focus on current technologies or innovations in your field.

You may also want to note business or economic trends, or make predictions for your customers or clients.

If the newsletter is distributed internally, you might comment upon new procedures or improvements to the business. Sales figures or earnings will show how your business is growing.

Some newsletters include a column that is updated every issue, for instance, an advice column, a book review, a letter from the president, or an editorial.

You can also profile new employees or top customers or vendors.

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## **Do You Have a Pain in the Neck?**

Do you awaken with a stiff neck many mornings? Do your neck and shoulders feel knotted up and tight after a long, stressful day at the office? Ever have numbness or tingling in your arms and hands? You may have a problem in your neck or cervical spine.

The cervical spine is comprised of the first seven vertebrae in our spine. Each segment has three joints, a disk, multiple supporting ligaments, and spinal nerves exiting. But, because of its anatomy and involvement with spinal nerves the neck can produce pain from our head to the middle of our back and down our arms to the tips of our fingers. Many symptoms such as pain in the shoulder blade, knots in our shoulders, or aching and weakness in our arms and hands actually originate from neck problems.

Common neck problems include bulging or herniated disks, degenerative disks or joints, whiplash, and stiff joints. Although some neck problems like whiplash are from trauma, the bulk of pain is non-traumatic and comes from repetitive stress to the neck. Our everyday activities, such as sleeping, office work, and sitting, place an enormous amount of stress on our neck when performed in poor postures. Over time this reduces flexibility and degenerates our disks and joints causing poor movement patterns and increased stress on the joints.

Many cases of neck pain can be improved through conservative physical treatment. The key is targeting the underlying cause of the problem. With pain sometimes outside of the neck it is important to have a thorough evaluation to rule out other problems such as shoulder dysfunction, rib problems, or carpal tunnel. Once the neck is determined to be the root cause of the pain, many conservative treatments can be used. These include joint mobilization, traction, postural training, and strengthening exercises. For people suffering from repetitive stress problems, improving office ergonomics or adjusting daily activities may be a key to reducing stresses and improving pain.

If you have questions about neck pain, or would like to speak to physical therapist contact Ascent Physical Therapy at 949-9966.

### **WIN A FREE MASSAGE!**

Some months have 30 days, some months have 31 days. How many months have 28 days?

Call Ascent PT before 9/15/09 with the correct answer and you will be entered in a drawing to win a free massage! Plus remember our refer a friend program? Refer a friend to Ascent PT and receive a FREE massage once your friend becomes a registered patient!

**970-949-9966**

