

# Back to School

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Back to Health Wellness Centre

## BACKPACK SAFETY

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Chiropractors are seeing an increase in the number of middle school, high school, and university students suffering from back pain from carrying heavy backpacks. It seems like a great way to get kids to carry their books. Unfortunately, the weight of the backpacks that kids carry has increased.

The weight of the backpack forces the student to hunch over with their shoulders rounded forward and head jettied forward. Over time, the muscles adapt to their new poor posture, often leading back problems and other injuries.



Studies indicate that students should only be carrying 15% of their body weight, 10% for primary school students.

Many parents and teachers are helping kids fight poor posture and backpack problems with posture exercises. These exercises train kids to stand straight with their head and shoulders pulled back in line with their hips. Stretching tight muscles and strengthening weak ones helps to restore and maintain good posture.

Backpacks should be worn on both shoulders to ensure the weight is distributed evenly between the shoulders and to reduce the curve of the spine.



All kids should be taught smart backpack ergonomics. This includes loading the heaviest objects closest to the back, wearing a well fitting and properly adjusted backpack. Snug fitting straps that are padded and a minimum of 2 inches wide can help reduce the biomechanical stress on the growing spine and surrounding muscles.

The back pack should be no higher than the shoulders and no lower than the hips. The waist strap on a backpack should be used to redistribute the weight from the spine and shoulders to the more stable hips.



### Student Rates for Chiropractic Care

At Back to Health we understand the financial restraints you may be under as a student. For that reason we offer students a discounted rate for chiropractic adjustments.

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# ATHLETICS

Basketball , volleyball, floor hockey, football, track and field, soccer...this list goes on and on. And the one thing they all have in common is that they are on their feet more often than not. The feet are the foundation of our body and many problems that we have as adults can stem from uncorrected foot misalignments. Children can have many of the same problems. In fact, kids are even more suscep-

tible as their bones are still growing and hardening.

Some problems later in life may have been easily correctible if found and treated in childhood. If your kids are complaining of knee, hip, low back or even neck problems you might want to consider having their feet checked. Foot misalignments can cause problems with the knees, hips, back and neck. Our kinesiologist at Back to

Health has the technology to do computerized footscans in order to analyze the biomechanics of the foot. Custom-made orthotics are a way of correcting these misalignments before they cause irreversible problems. If you think that some of your child's discomfort may be due to the physical stress of sports as well as some biomechanical problems book an appointment with Keri-Lyn today!



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## POSTURE AT THE COMPUTER

Here's a quick checklist to see how your posture is while working at a computer

### Chair

- feet positioned so knees are at a 90° angle
- sitting firmly against back of chair
- supporting low back with lumbar roll or rolled towel

### Terminal

- top of screen at eye level
- sitting 30-60 cm away from screen

### Keyboard

- keyboard directly in front of you
- Upper arms relaxed with forearms at 90° angle
- wrists off the edge of the desk

### Mouse

- arm relaxed and bent at a 90° angle
- hand, wrist and forearm in a straight line
- moving mouse with arm not wrist
- mouse positioned so you don't have to reach for it

## MASSAGE THERAPY

Studying can be hard on the body but that won't be a good enough excuse for your parents if they ask why you aren't at your desk!

Posture is very important while pouring over your books as maintaining those positions for a long period of time can stress your bones and muscles.

Nowadays, many students work on their computer at home, reach for a mouse, strain their eyes and slouch in their chair. This can

lead not only to sore backs, headaches, and neck pain but left unnoticed can lead to more permanent postural changes.

Massage therapy is a good way to work out some of those stresses and learn about strengthening weaker musculature and your posture. Your registered massage therapist can help to reduce muscle tension in the neck that may be causing headaches or in the low back area which may be distracting you. They can also help educate you on

setting up your desk area, advise you on stretching and strengthening techniques and make sure that you are 100% for those final exams!

The first step in THIS learning curve is prevention. Try to sit up straight, bring your mouse close to the edge of the desk and take frequent breaks. (that's probably the best one you've heard!). You will find that your concentration will increase if your discomfort decreases.