

Q&A Backpack Safety
Ask the Physical Therapist
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Q: How do I choose a backpack for my child?

A: Whether investing in your own or your child's education this fall, take some time to invest in their health by following these backpack safety tips:

- Choose a backpack with wide padded shoulder straps.
- Lift the pack with both arms placing one shoulder strap on at a time. Do *not* use momentum to "whip" the backpack over your shoulders.
- Keep the total weight of the backpack no greater than 15% of the student's bodyweight.
- Place heavier items in the center of the backpack and use all available pockets to ensure its weight is distributed evenly.
- Position the backpack at the center of the back so that it does not extend past the low back or hang more to one side than the other.

Statistics courtesy of the American Pediatric Society. www.apa.org