

IS YOUR BACKPACK GETTING YOU DOWN?

IF SO...HERE ARE THREE EASY STEPS TO BETTER BACK HEALTH:

- Strip down your burden
- Strap in at the waist
- Share the load between both shoulders

WONDERING HOW HEAVY IS TOO HEAVY?

According to American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, your backpack should not be more than **15%** of your body weight.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN A GOOD BACKPACK?

- Padded back that doesn't dig into your back
- Contoured shoulder straps to better balance weight
- Waist belt to transfer weight to your legs
- Reflective materials are a good idea in the night

BACK-SAVING TIPS:

Lifting - with your feet shoulder-width apart, bend your hips and knees, keeping your back as straight as possible.

Posture - think tall with your chest lifted, shoulders relaxed, chin tucked in and level.

Sitting - don't sit for long hours; stand up, stretch and walk around.

Driving - position your car seat so your back is supported and your legs are relaxed and slightly bent.

Sleeping - your mattress should be firm enough to support your spine in a neutral position.

Exercise - a healthy body-weight gives less strain on your back.