

AUGUST

THE THERAPY Connection

A newsletter for our valued patients & friends.



TIP OF THE MONTH

Back to School means Back to Backpacks

Going back to school means new backpacks filled with books and school supplies. We all try our best to pick out the best ones, but how do you know the backpack isn't hurting your child's spine?

Recent studies have shown that 64% of children suffer from back pain. Most cases can be traced to overloaded or ill fitting backpacks or other school bags. If a child's backpack is too heavy, a child may react by bending forward at the hips or by arching the back¹. This can cause the spine to compress unnaturally, and over time, may lead to shoulder, neck, and back pain. To help avoid such scenarios, we have some backpack safety tips designed to help keep a child out of pain².

- **Two straps:** Make sure the bag has two straps. Single strapped bags, like satchels and duffel bags, should be avoided. A single strap places the entire load on one side of the body. Two straps balance the load on both shoulders.
- **Size:** The bag should be no larger than the child's back. It should rest 1-2 inches below the shoulders and no more than 4 inches below the waistline (note: the waistline is level with the bellybutton).
- **Wide, Padded Straps:** The bag should have wide shoulder straps. Wide straps distribute the load over more area of the shoulder. The wider the better, with a minimum of two inches. The straps should also be padded. Padding spreads the load as well as alleviates any pressure points.
- **Lightweight:** The bag should be light. The stress on the back is caused by the weight of the bag. Anything you can do to reduce that weight will reduce the stress.
- **Waist Strap:** It dramatically helps direct the load away from the shoulders and onto the much stronger waist and hip muscle groups.
- **Compartments:** Having a bag with several compartments help keep the load where you put it. A shifting load means a shifting, dynamic, stress. Dynamic stresses are bad. 2nd, it lets you put flat things next to the back and pointy things away from it.
- **Chest Strap:** A strap across the chest from shoulder strap to shoulder strap is a small, but worthwhile improvement. It holds the shoulder straps securely on the main part of the shoulder eliminating slippage and load shifting. It also fights the urge to slouch.
- **Padded Back:** The back should be padded as well. It will alleviate any pressure points. And it will protect the back from being poked and prodded by what is loaded in the bag.

Call today to ask us how we can help you get back to enjoying the activities that are important to you!

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"It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop."

— Confucius

TELL A FRIEND

The greatest compliment we can receive is for our patients to tell their friends and family about their positive experience with us. If you know someone who is experiencing pain or limitations and you believe they could benefit from therapy, please tell them about us.

We will ensure that they will receive great care and have a positive therapy experience with us!

A RECIPE FOR YOU

Baked Zucchini Rounds

Thanks to our friend Marianne for this great recipe! When she makes this, she always gets compliments on her fried zucchini, and, there is no frying involved!



Ingredients:

- 2 medium sized zucchini squash
- ¼ Cup plain breadcrumbs
- ¼ Cup parmesan cheese
- 1 Tbsp olive oil

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450
2. Slice zucchini into ¼ inch thick rounds
3. Pour the olive oil into a Ziploc bag, add the cut up zucchini and shake until all pieces are coated
4. Mix the breadcrumbs and parmesan in a medium sized bowl
5. Press the flat sides of the zucchini into the breadcrumb/parmesan mixture, coating both sides well
6. Place onto baking sheet and bake at 450 for 25-30 min
7. Serve with marinara sauce as a "dip" if desired ~ enjoy!

More information on backpack safety including weight recommendations are available [here](https://ergonomics.about.com/od/buyingguide/bb/bbbookbags.htm). We also have backpack safety report cards that we can make available for schools as an educational resource for parents. Please call the clinic with questions or for more information

References:

¹ergonomics.about.com/od/buyingguide/bb/bbbookbags.htm

²kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/outdoor/backpack.html