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From: Cheryl Zapata
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2018 11:38 AM
To: TBI All Employees; TBI Physicians
Subject: Dr Bosita story featured in Dallas Morning News - Backpack Safety

Dr. Bosita was featured in an article for DallasNews.com you can find the story here:

<https://www.dallasnews.com/life/better-living/2018/08/10/giant-backpack-may-look-cool-probably-hurting-kids-back>

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BETTER LIVING 3 DAYS AGO

That giant backpack may look cool, but it's probably hurting your kid's back

*Leslie Barker, Senior writer, health and fitness*

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Editor's note: As school bells begin ringing, we're republishing this story from August 2016 about making sure your kids' backpacks aren't hurting their backs. We added a couple of tips to the original story.

When I was in school, nobody but hikers wore backpacks. As I recall, we actually used our lockers to store books, bringing one or two out a time as need be. There were things called satchels, which were plaid oddities with fake leather handles, and while I always wanted one, my wise mother knew that within days it would be chewed by the dog or lost.

But backpacks! What self-respecting kid these days would be without one? They free the arms, look cool, carry lots of stuff. And therein, say the back pros, lies the problem. Or one of the problems.

Dr. Rey Bosita, an orthopedic spinal surgeon with [Texas Back Institute](#) as well as father of four sons, attributes these complaints from elementary through high-school kids to poor-fitting backpacks:

Lower back pain

Neck pain

Shoulder pain

Headaches

A backpack that's too heavy or ill-fitting can do nasty things like these to the body: Distort the natural curve of the back. Lead to rounded shoulders. Make a kid lean forward and more likely to fall. How un-fun is THAT in middle school (or anywhere)?



Choosing the right backpack is oh-so-important, not only for the cool factor but for the healthy back factor, too.

(AP photo)

What to do? Start with this rule of thumb: A backpack should weigh no more than about 10 percent (some experts say less) of the child's weight. Here are more tips:

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Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a waist strap.

Load books and other heavier items closer to the body

When full, the pack should drop no more than 4 inches below the child's waist.

Multiple compartments are great, unless they make the kid feel like each one needs to be filled.

Be proactive: Ask your kids if their backpacks are comfortable. Watch them walk with the packs. Remind them to tell you if they start hurting.


A backpack is meant to be **worn on the back**, not slung over one shoulder.

The most common indicator of an ill-fitting backpack, Bosita says, is bad posture.

"Kids can do homework in positions that would be considered an OSHA violation in the workplace," he says. "Many will sit on the bed and do homework and look down at a laptop." That can lead to what he calls a "turtle-ing effect," which in turn can lead to pain and discomfort.

"Help your kids get the right tools for the right job to help make the school year go more smoothly."

And if that means a rolling backpack, which isn't always considered cool, so be it.

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