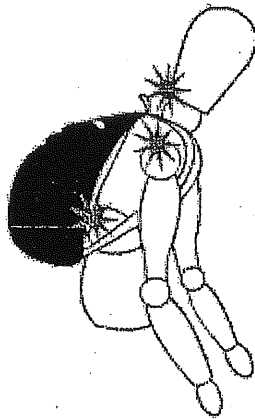
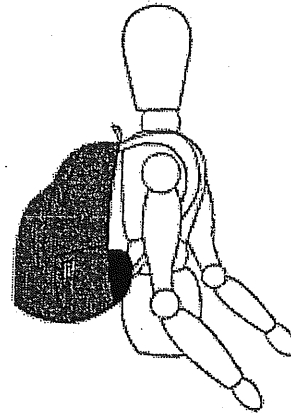


## Tips on Buying, Packing and Carrying a Backpack

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Buy a High Quality Backpack</b>      | Select a backpack that has <b>padded, adjustable and wide straps</b> to prevent the straps from digging into your shoulders and to allow for a proper fit. A backpack that has a well-padded area that touches your back and shoulders will prevent discomfort. |
| <b>Pack Correctly</b>                   | Arrange the items so the heaviest objects are closest to your back. If your backpack has several compartments, disperse the weight evenly across the back to create balance.  |
| <b>How Much to Carry</b>                | A packed backpack should weigh no more than <b>10-15%</b> of your total body weight. If it is too heavy, carry the extra books in front of your body, cradling the weight in your arms against your stomach.  |
| <b>Always Use Both Straps</b>           | <u>Use both straps</u> to distribute the weight across your back and shoulders. Using only one strap makes your body off balance and can cause shoulder and back pain/injury.   |
| <b>Don't Wear Your Backpack Too Low</b> | Adjust the straps so the bottom of the backpack is about two inches above your waist. Hip and chest straps can be used to transfer weight from the shoulders to the body and hips to help stabilize the backpack.   |
| <b>Stand Up Straight</b>                | Keep your spine in a neutral position. <b>Don't slouch and don't lean forward or backward.</b>  |



**Improper**



**Proper**

### Why the Concern Regarding Backpack use?

- ❖ Backpacks that are too heavy or improperly worn can lead to muscle fatigue, stress and strain accompanied by shoulder, neck and back pain/injury.
- ❖ Narrow straps can hinder circulation, causing numbness and tingling in the arms, which over time can cause weakness in the hands.
- ❖ If your backpack is too heavy, you may compensate by leaning forward, affecting the natural curves in your spine, which may cause harmful rounding of the shoulders and increased curve in the upper back.