


Back to School Back Health



From September to June, they approach school like miniature hunchbacks of Notre Dame. They are the backpacked children of America and their oversized packs can cause back and neck pain, muscle strain, poor posture and compromised balance. Injury seems inevitable when you examine these massive packs and their pint-sized Sherpas. Dr. David Lepla of Sierra Neurosurgery Group in Reno explains, “A too heavy backpack causes a child to compensate by bending forward at the hips or arching their back. This causes the spine to compress

unnaturally and can lead to shoulder, neck and back pain.”

The solution starts with common sense. Choose a size-appropriate pack with wide straps worn over both shoulders and limit the load. Rolling backpacks are great, but they’ve been banned in some Washoe County public schools due to space constraints.

For more information on spine health and treatment options for back pain, contact the experts at Sierra Neurosurgery Group at **775.323.2080** or visit **sierraneurosurgery.com**. 

Preventing Injury

- Use both shoulder straps
- Limit weight to 20% of child’s body weight
- Pack only what child needs that day
- Choose lightweight packs with wide, padded straps
- Keep child physically fit