

Back to School

September brings the start of a new academic year and most of us will be getting everything prepared for the new term ahead, buying new pencil cases, sewing names in to uniform etc. However, with the instances of back pain in school-aged children on the rise, take time to consider the following information to help keep them injury free.

Carrying heavy bags full of text books can put a large amount of strain on a child or adolescent's back, but this can be combated by the correct choice, and use, of bag. Choose a backpack with wide, padded straps – use both straps, pulled up so that it sits comfortably on the back, not on the bottom! Carrying the backpack too low with the straps too loose, or slung over one shoulder, causes increased strain on the neck and shoulders as well as the lower back.

Pack the heavier items closer to the back and the lighter items further away, and distribute the load as evenly as possible.

The same applies to teachers too when carrying the marking to and from school!

Remember also to wear supportive, well-fitting shoes to work to help maintain good posture whilst teaching. Be mindful of your own back whilst bending down to help the children – bend from the knees, not the back, and move around the classroom as much as possible to avoid being sedentary for prolonged periods of time.

Homework/Marking

With more of us using laptops and tablets in favour of desktop PCs, it is easier to slip into bad postural habits when typing or browsing the internet. The portable nature of these devices means they can be easily used sitting on the sofa or even on the bed, in front of the television, causing us to adopt a hunched and twisted posture. Encourage your child to do their homework sat at a desk on a comfortable and supportive chair. Laptop stands which raise the screen to eye level, and a separate full size mouse and keyboard can also be very beneficial.



www.cranfoldphysio.co.uk
01483 267747

Back Pain

FACTS ABOUT BACK PAIN

- Back pain affects 7 out of 10 of us at some point in our lives
- Most back pain is a simple strain which eases quickly and is not indicative of serious pathology
- 95% of back pain cases are classed as mechanical – usually brought on by heavy, awkward or repetitive lifting or bad posture
- Most simple back pain can be self-managed

SEE YOUR GP IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS WITH YOUR BACK PAIN

- Weakness of leg or foot muscles
- Numbness in the buttock, leg or foot
- Bladder or bowel control problems
- Unexplained weight-loss and feeling unwell
- Pain that develops slowly and gets worse