

# 10 Tips for a Healthy Back

1. Exercise every day.
2. Eat healthy foods and drink lots of water.
3. When sitting and standing, keep your shoulders back & squared...and try not to "hunch" your back.
4. Stretch before and after sports.
5. Don't overload your backpack!
6. Stretch your legs and back after each hour of sitting – between classes is ideal.
7. Never cradle the phone (or anything else) between your head and shoulder.
8. Sleep on your back or side instead of your stomach.
9. Get enough rest and sleep on a good pillow and firm mattress.
10. Have regular spinal check-ups.

# Carrying Your Backpack

- DON'T sling your backpack on one side – this can cause the spine to lean, putting stress on the joints and muscles in the mid - and lower - back.
- DO wear both straps and adjust them so that the pack fits snugly. Check the fit-you should be able to slide your hand between the backpack and your back.
- DO use the waist strap because it reduces the strain on your back and transfers some of the load to your hips.
- DON'T carry your backpack too low as this will cause you to lean forward and puts the weight on your upper back.

