

## BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

The summer is coming to a close and school is back in session! Many of us are getting ready for the fall semester or have kids that are returning to school. So, this month will be filled with driving, shopping, and plenty of walking. During all of these activities, we would encourage you to remember proper body mechanics for yourself as well as your children.

Repeated trips in and out of the car can fatigue you causing you to use improper body mechanics. A tip from the Livestrong website recommends when getting out of the car to “first open the door completely swinging the legs out to the side, and pivoting on the buttocks so the entire body moves as one unit. Do not twist the low back. Place one hand on the seat and the other hand on the car frame. Scoot forward and place feet under the hips, lean forward, and push with one hand while pulling with the other. Make sure to use the leg muscles to come up to a standing position. To sit down, reverse the procedure.” Something to also consider when you are out shopping for school supplies is finding the right backpack. Backpacks can cause neck, shoulder, and back discomfort if not selected and worn properly. The following are some helpful tips in order to avoid these issues.

- 1) Limit the load you carry to about 15% of your body weight. Many doctors recommend a max of 25# regardless of your size.
- 2) Select a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps.
- 3) Wear the shoulder straps over **both** shoulders. Slinging the straps over one shoulder can cause you to lean to one side.
- 4) Adjust the shoulder straps to keep the backpack snug against your back.
- 5) Make sure your backpack has multiple compartments to distribute loads.
- 6) Use a wheeled backpack for heavy loads and long distances.

Selecting proper footwear is another important factor. Worn out shoes should be replaced to prevent injury. A walking shoe should be fairly lightweight and provide good shock absorption. But not all walking shoes are created equal. When selecting the right walking shoe, consider the following tips:

- 1) Your shoe should conform to the shape of **your** foot; your feet should never be forced to conform to the shape of a pair of shoes.
- 2) Walk in the shoes before buying them. They should feel comfortable right away. (If the store has an objection to this, you may wait to find another store.)
- 3) Check that your heel fits snugly in each shoe and doesn't slip as you walk.
- 4) Be sure your foot has enough room in the toe box. (There should be about a half inch between your toes and the end of the shoe.)
- 5) Go shoe shopping at the end of the day when your feet are at their largest.
- 6) Keep track of how many miles you have put on your shoes and replace them every 300 to 600 miles.

Keep these tips in mind when you are purchasing your next pair of walking shoes. Your feet, legs, and back will thank you for it. We hope that you enjoy your Fall Season!

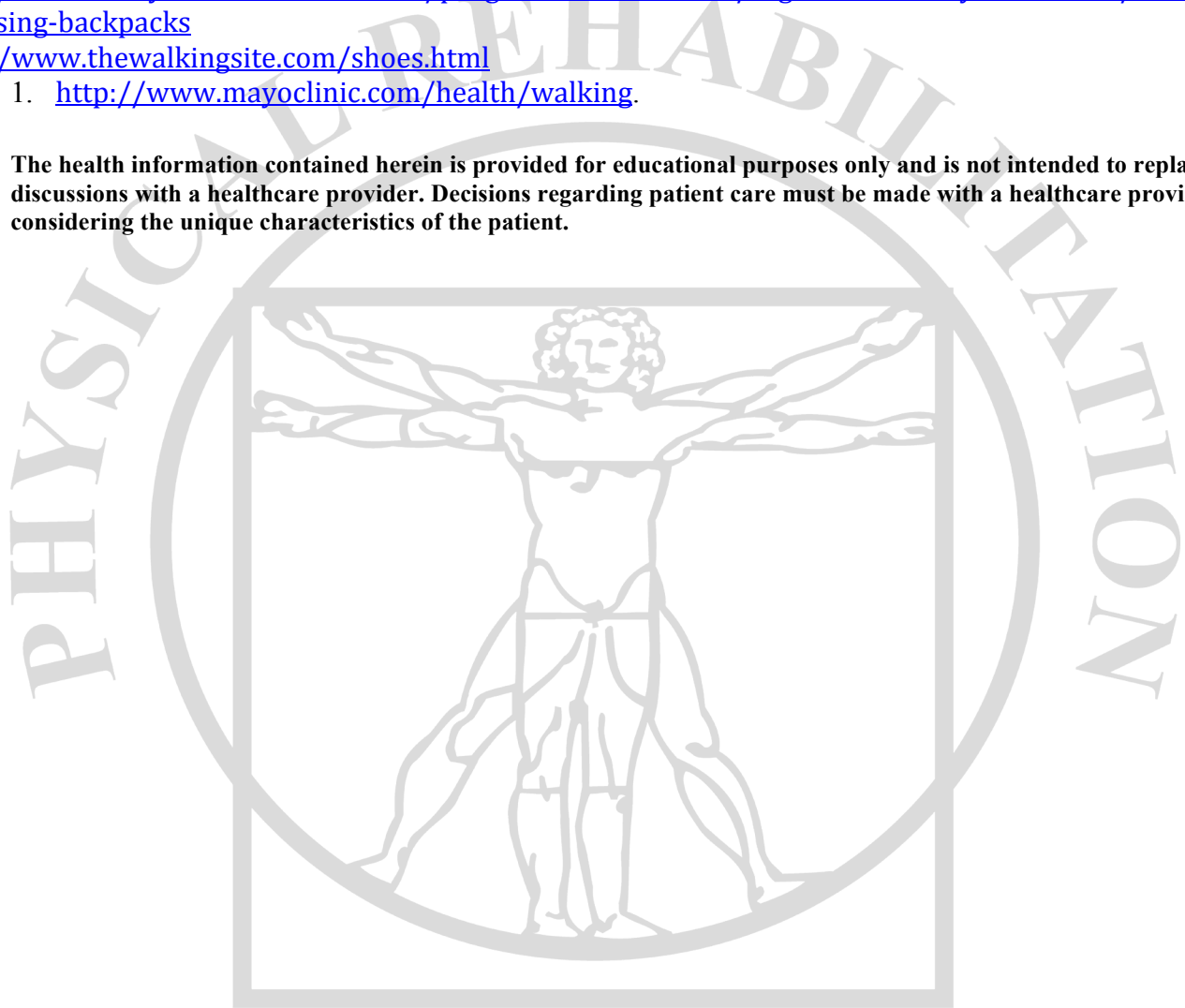
<http://www.livestrong.com/article/319419-how-to-use-proper-body-mechanics>

<http://www.safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/programs-and-services/ergonomics-body-mechanics/selecting-and-using-backpacks>

<http://www.thewalkingsite.com/shoes.html>

1. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/walking>.

The health information contained herein is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace discussions with a healthcare provider. Decisions regarding patient care must be made with a healthcare provider, considering the unique characteristics of the patient.



## INSTITUTE

### Stone Oak Location

19260 Stone Oak Parkway, Suite 107, San Antonio, TX 78258  
210.545.9355/fax 210.545.9369

### Medical Center Location

5282 Medical Drive, Suite 550, San Antonio, TX 78229  
210.593.0774/fax 210.593.0707

[www.mypri.net](http://www.mypri.net)