



Ontario
Chiropractic
Association



PACK IT LIGHT. WEAR IT RIGHT. Handbags

Some women carry the whole world in their handbag, but a heavy bag or purse can cause pain and injury to your back, neck and shoulders. Overstuffed bags also cause poor posture by encouraging the carrier to lean to one side. The good news is pain and injury can be easily avoided by following a few simple tips.

Choosing a handbag

1. Choose a handbag that is proportionate to your body size and no larger than what is needed. Your handbag should not weigh more than 10 per cent of your body weight.
2. Choose a handbag that has several individual pockets, instead of one large compartment. This will help to distribute the weight of the contents more evenly and keep them from shifting.

Packing a handbag

1. Change the size and weight of your wallet once in a while. You may also consider one wallet for your work and a different one for when you go out, as you may need different objects for both.
2. Ensure the weight is evenly distributed in the purse by using all the pockets.

Carrying a handbag

1. Use both hands to check the weight of the handbag.
2. Instead of always carrying your handbag on the same shoulder, switch sides often so each shoulder gets a rest.
3. Square your shoulders — many women have a habit of lifting the shoulder on which the purse is carried to keep the straps from slipping.

More tips

1. Try to maintain good posture. When standing, your head, shoulders, hips and ankles should line-up, one comfortably above the other.
2. If you can walk to lunch or a meeting, lock your purse in your desk or locker and carry only your cash and/or credit cards in a pocket.

By following these simple strategies, it's easy to lighten your load.

