

# Pack it Light. Wear it Right.

## Handbags

Some women carry what seems like the world in their handbag. But a heavy handbag, shoulder bag or purse can injure your back, neck and shoulders. Handbags also create poor posture by encouraging the carrier to lean to one side, which reduces their ability to maintain balance and restricts movement.

### Here are some tips to help you prevent injury:

#### Choosing a handbag:

- Choose a handbag that is proportionate to your body size and not larger than what is needed. Your handbag should not weigh more than 10 to 15 per cent of your weight. Some handbags weigh more than 15 pounds!
- Select a handbag made of lightweight material (vinyl or canvas instead of leather).
- The shoulder straps should be wide, adjustable and padded, if possible. Ensure the straps do not fit too snugly. Poorly designed shoulder straps can dig deep into the muscles and put strain on the nerves.



- If possible, select a strap that is long enough to place over the head to rest on the opposite side of the body to help distribute weight more evenly.



- Choose a handbag that has several individual pockets instead of one large compartment; this will help to distribute the weight evenly and keep contents from shifting.

#### Packing a handbag:

- Resist the urge to carry everything with you all day. Pay attention to the things that you use most often. Consider leaving some less commonly used items behind.
- Fully clean out your purse once a week.

