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### Toting Equipment Improperly Can Impact Spinal Health

If you or your employees are regularly toting laptops or other equipment on your back or shoulders, be sure it's done properly.

"Studies, especially among school children, have found that items carried in backpacks or single-strap bags can lead to back and neck injuries," says Lori Eig of Ergo Concepts LLC. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that nearly 7,300 emergency room visits each year result for injuries related to book bags.

Some tips for wearing a backpack safely and properly:

- **Distribute the weight evenly.** Put heavier items on the bottom to keep the weight off of shoulders and maintain better posture.
- **Wear both shoulder straps unless the pack is designed for use on one shoulder.** Carrying a heavy backpack using one strap shifts the weight to one side, which can lead to neck and muscle spasms, low back pain and walking improperly.
- **Choose backpacks with heavily padded shoulder straps and a lumbar support.** Non-padded straps dig into the shoulders causing pain due to compressional loading of nearby joints and muscles.
- **Choose a backpack with a lumbar cushion.** The lumbar cushion redistributes weight to the lower extremities, creating a fulcrum that facilitates an upright standing position.

A variety of backpacks specifically designed to help reduce the risk of back injury, including the new AirPack System, are available at [The Ergonomic Back Store \(www.ergonomicbackstore.com\)](http://www.ergonomicbackstore.com).

## Welcome to Ergo 411

Back pain...Carpal tunnel syndrome....Neck pain....Eye strain.

These are just some of the workplace injuries due in part to less than adequate workstation arrangements. And each year such injuries cost U.S. employers, like you, billions of \$\$\$ in employee absenteeism and health-related expenditures.

**An appropriate, ergonomically designed workplace can save you money and your employees from suffering physical and emotional pain and lost wages due to absenteeism from work.**

Ergo 411 is a FREE quarterly newsletter designed to assist you in minimizing such workplace injuries—and the costs associated with them!

Ergo 411 comes courtesy of **Ergo Concepts, LLC** ([www.ergoconcepts-llc.com](http://www.ergoconcepts-llc.com)), a Washington, DC-based consulting firm owned by doctors of physical therapy and certified ergonomic evaluation specialists, and **The Ergonomic Back Store** ([www.ergonomicbackstore.com](http://www.ergonomicbackstore.com)), which produces numerous ergonomically designed products, including back-friendly furniture and workstation accessories of all kinds.

(Please refer below to our privacy policy and how to subscribe/unsubscribe).

## What is Ergonomics, Anyway?

Since this is the first issue of **Ergo 411**, we thought it best to clarify the term ergonomics.

Ergonomics is the science of designing worker-friendly environments, thus maximizing productivity by reducing operator fatigue, discomfort and injury.

Applied ergonomics could be as simple as modifying a grip on a construction tool or adding a footrest under a computer operator's desk.

The point is that providing a good ergonomic fit reduces a worker's chance of developing work-related

injuries, often called musculoskeletal disorders, repetitive stress injuries or repetitive strain injuries.

General risk factors for these kinds of injuries include:

- Awkward postures
- Repetition
- Contact pressure
- Duration (time performing any particular task)
- Temperature
- Lighting
- Noise
- Vibration
- Force

(continued)

Each working environment has varying degrees of the above ergonomic risks present and each employee's level of exposure to these risk factors may differ from worker to worker and from day to day.

The goal of good ergonomics is to create workstations that either eliminate or reduce workers' levels of exposure to these ergonomic "red flags".

In addition to reduced health care costs, companies that take a proactive approach to ergonomics find worker

turnover is decreased, thus saving \$\$\$ associated with the rehiring and training of employees.

Also, fewer workers compensation claims are recorded, saving some companies millions of dollars.

In future issues of **Ergo 411**, we will address:

- How to reduce risk factors
- Workplace injuries such as back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, neck pain, eye strain and more

- How these injuries develop
- How to prevent them from developing
- How to adjust workspace when and if symptoms occur

In the meantime, for more information to help meet your product needs contact [the Ergonomic Back Store](#) toll free at 1-877-358-8230. For your service needs including ergonomic consulting, contact [Ergo Concepts LLC](#) toll free at 877-ERGO-411. Thank you.

**Privacy Policy**—we do not sell, rent, or lend the e-mail addresses of our subscribers. If you received this message from a friend, you can sign up for Ergo 411 by logging on to [www.ergonomicbackstore.com](http://www.ergonomicbackstore.com) and following instructions.

If you do not wish to continue receiving Ergo 411, simply reply to our Ergo 411 email and type "REMOVE" on the subject line.

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## Post These Tips for Office Employees ▼

# Ergo 411 *Tips for Office Employees*

published by [The Ergonomic Back Store](#) and [Ergo Concepts, LLC](#)

Many musculoskeletal disorders, repetitive stress and repetitive strain injuries in office workers can be easily avoided.

**A few simple measures will reduce your risks:**

- **Make time for movement.**
- **Adjust your posture every 20 to 30 minutes.**
- **Stand to take a phone call.**
- **Adjust your chair slightly, or use the chair's rock function for a few minutes.**
- **Walk to someone's office versus sending an email.**
- **Place printers a short walk away versus a close reach away.**
- **Even perfect posture, if it is sustained, can lead to injury.**
- **Let go of your mouse when you are not using it.**

## NEW!

The **Hoverstop** active ergonomic mouse is the perfect training tool to help you let go of the mouse when you are not using it. Second generation now in stock.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE.](#)



# The Ergonomic Back Store Now Features Humanscale

The Ergonomic Back Store is now proud to include the famous Humanscale line to its list of ergonomic solutions.

“Humanscale enables us to provide an entirely new level of style and comfort to our customers,” says Harry Davis, Jr., owner of the Ergonomic Back Store.

**The Freedom chair by Humanscale** is designed to give the maximum ergonomic benefit to the sitter with a minimum number of manually-adjusted controls. Once the chair is fitted, no further adjustment is required. The idea is that movement, which is essential for a healthy body, shouldn't be constricted by locking mechanisms and manual controls.

In addition to its many ergonomic benefits, the modern design of the Freedom chair earned it a place on “24”, the FOX Network television show starring Keifer Sutherland. This stylish, functional chair is a good fit in any upscale office setting.



## The Ergonomic Back Store's Deep Roots in the Industry

I founded The Ergonomic Back Store in 2003. My father, Harry, Sr. literally co-wrote the book on ergonomics when he penned the well-known “Ergonomic Design for People at Work Volumes 1 and 2.”

In addition to co-founding the Kodak Human Factors Group, my father served as President of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, and Secretary General and President of the International Ergonomic Association, as well as numerous other prestigious positions.

I'm proud to carry on my father's legacy by providing ergonomic furniture products that can reduce fatigue and even help people with previous health conditions work for longer periods of time without the pain they have been accustomed to.

Harry Davis, Jr. owner,  
The Ergonomic Back Store

*The Ergonomic Back Store carries a large variety of back-friendly furniture and accessories.  
Visit us online at [www.ergonomicbackstore.com](http://www.ergonomicbackstore.com)*

**“I just want to express my sincere appreciation for the great design of the “Comfort Board” I received from the Ergonomic Back Store. It's improved my daily work productivity by 75 percent and has been a lifesaver with regard to relieving my fatigue level as a result of a chronic illness.”**

Kate Szymanski  
Brighton Central Schools  
Rochester, NY