

THE INTEGRATOR



HRUSKA CLINIC™
Restorative Physical Therapy Services

back
to
school

As kids return to school this fall, many of their days are going to be filled with sitting at a desk. I'm often surprised how many young, seemingly healthy kids that I see throughout the school year that suffer from chronic back, neck, and/or hip pain. I have found that simply addressing how they sit at their desks can have a MAJOR impact on how they function throughout the day (This goes for adults who work at a computer all day as well). If you're familiar with our brand of physical therapy at all, then you've probably been educated in normal human imbalances and functional tendencies that contribute to chronic pain. Included in this list is the tendency to sit with our weight shifted more to the right than the left, we like to keep the right knee and hip shifted back more than the left knee and hip, as well as letting our left leg lay out to the side, and we frequently rest more weight through the right arm on our desks/tables than the left. Surprising as it may sound, simply making the following adjustments to our sitting habits allow most people to better tolerate sitting for extended periods of time:

- Try to keep your weight evenly distributed through your "sit bones" (we all have a bony area on each side that we sit on called our ischial tuberosities; we sometimes refer to them as our sit bones) or even try to be more aware of your left sit bone than the right.
- Along with sensing your sit bones, try to shift your left knee and hip back as compare to the right.
- If you find that your left leg rolls out to the side, actively bring your left leg "in"; ideally, your thighs will be roughly parallel to each other while you continue to sense your sit bones and keep your left knee and hip shifted back, and last, but not least.
- When you're sitting at your desk, if you find that you do indeed tend to rest your weight though your right arm, try mirroring that habit by resting more weight through your left arm.

Don't think that you should exclusively do as directed above without ever allowing your natural tendencies to come through, however, by incorporating these tips into your sitting routine you may find that sitting will be less of a pain in your behind!

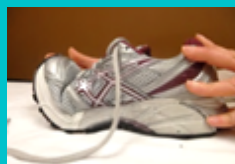
The 411 on Shoes

A new school year finds us getting new school supplies, clothing AND new shoes. Whether we are school age or not, we all need to change out our shoes more often than we might think. Even though your shoes "look good" it doesn't mean they are supporting your feet correctly. Most shoes last for 300-500 miles before they break down. If you're like us, who keeps track of how many miles you walk in given day? If you wear the same shoe every day and most of the day, they need to be replaced in 3 to 4 months! On your next trip to buy shoes keep these handy tips in mind!

- **Your shoes should feel comfortable right away. You should not feel like you need to "break them in."**
- **When walking you should be able to "sense" your heel, arch, and big toe on both feet.**
- **If your shoes have laces, they need to be tightened from the bottom up. (this keeps your heel secure in the shoe)**
- **The laces should be tied firm enough that you need to untie your shoe to put your foot in or out of the shoe. (This helps your heel counter to last longer)**
- **Below are images of qualities that you can look for in any type of shoe you're shopping for from causal, running, basketball, etc.**



Heel counters should be firm and not collapse in



Toe box bends easily at the front of the shoe



Heel counter should be firm on the outside of the shoe



Sole of shoe should be level across the horizontal plane

Backpack.....Backpack

When we think backpacks, we recall images of busy school days. Kids often carry very heavy loads back and forth to school on their backs. Wearing a backpack is a routine chore for students. Sometimes our backpacks are filled with many heavy books and other learning materials such as a laptop or tablet. The problem is not the quantity of items being carried. Rather, the issue is the weight of the backpack and the way it is being worn on the shoulders and around the waistline.



A typical backpack filled with textbooks and other school essentials can weigh more than 30% of the child's body weight. The recommended carrying load is between 10-15% of the individual's body weight. This means that if you weigh 100 lbs., your backpack should weigh no more than 10-15 lbs. When you put a heavy weight on your shoulders, the weight's force can pull you backward. To compensate, you may lean forward at the waist or arch your back. This can place undue stress and strain on your back, shoulders, and neck.

Children are not the only ones who suffer from issues related to backpacks. Adults often have problems as well, although the bag is more likely to be an overstuffed purse or laptop case rather than a backpack. These bags are often worse than backpacks because they are typically worn on one side of the body, straining muscles to achieve balance. Wearing a bag on one side can cause or reinforce muscle imbalances in the shoulders and spine.

Carrying too much weight in a backpack or purse or wearing it the wrong way can lead to pain and strain and poor posture. Please consider how you load and wear your backpacks to avoid health problems.

Backpack strategies and tips!

- Distribute weight evenly by using both straps. Wearing a pack slung over one shoulder can cause a child to lean to one side, curving the spine and causing pain or discomfort
- Adjust the shoulder straps so that the pack fits snugly on the child's back. A pack that hangs loosely from the back can pull the child backwards and strain muscles.
- The backpack should not hang more than 4 inches below the waistline: one that hangs too low increases weight on the shoulders, causing one to lean forward when walking.
- The smaller sizes are typically better—the larger the bag, the more likely you are to fill it!!
- Rearrange items within the bag by placing heavier items closer to the body and towards the bottom of bag.
- Sort through your bag regularly. (only tote essentials)
- Lighten the load. Leave un-needed textbooks at school, or use your locker!

Staff Spotlight



Having been at the Hruska Clinic for just over 10 years Torin is the newest Physical Therapist to the clinic. This speaks to the consistency and dedication of the staff here at the Hruska Clinic. Torin was born in Colorado Springs, CO, went to undergraduate and Physical Therapy school at the University of North Dakota (Go Sioux!). Torin graduated in 1999 and after a short stint at a pediatric clinic took his first outpatient clinic job in Sioux City, Iowa. He took his first class in Postural Restoration from a just starting Postural Restoration Institute that first year and has been hooked on it ever since. After almost 10 years living back in North Dakota, Torin and his family took the opportunity to move to Lincoln to be a part of the Hruska Clinic. The uniqueness of the approach we utilize, and the ability to practice Postural Restoration based physical therapy with some of the best therapists in the world is an opportunity they couldn't pass up. The ability to integrate and collaborate with other professionals in Lincoln and with other therapists around the globe also makes this a great place to be.

Torin married his wife, Leslie, a Physical Therapist, whom he met over a dead body in anatomy lab, in 2001. They have 5 school-age children that keep them busy every day. They have found Lincoln to be a great place to raise a family. When not driving someone, somewhere, they will be at the pool in the summer, working out at the gym, or enjoying any peace and quiet they can at home with their family. They really enjoy the community they have established through work, school and their church and look forward to being a part of the Lincoln and Hruska Clinic community for a long time to come.