



**Therapy Solutions**  
TAKE YOUR LIFE BACK.

SEPTEMBER 2023

## WHAT'S INSIDE

**STAFF SPOTLIGHT**  
Emily Carda

**BACK TO  
SCHOOL ISSUE**

**SCHEDULE YOUR  
APPOINTMENT!**  
We Make It Easy To  
Schedule Today!



Scan the code with your  
camera app, and schedule your  
appointment with us today!



*Pain Free Backpack  
Usage With OT!*

**WE ARE HERE FOR YOU! CONTACT US TODAY!**

**701.483.1000! • THERAPY-SOLUTIONS.NET**

# Carry Smart Travel Light



As summer ends, the days shorten, the nights feel cooler—and stores line their aisles with school supplies. As you take your child shopping for a new backpack, you may wonder about how heavy backpacks affect your child's musculoskeletal system, especially if your child has complained to you about back pain.

You may be right to worry. Evidence suggests a connection between improper backpack usage (including heavier-than-normal bags) and adolescents' back pain or other musculoskeletal disorders. But with heavy school books and other supplies, backpacks are necessary for any school-age kid.

Fortunately, the occupational therapists at Therapy Solutions are here to help! Occupational therapy focuses on helping you develop the strength and skills necessary for day-to-day activities, including using a backpack properly.

Curious to learn more about how occupational therapy can help your child use their backpack without the threat of pain or impairment? Call us to schedule an appointment today!

## THREE BACKPACK SAFETY TIPS FROM OUR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

Using a backpack regularly doesn't have to be a source of pain or potential injury. Our occupational therapists will work with you and your child to develop a customized program to help them utilize proper body mechanics and backpack best practices as they carry their books to and from school.

Here are a few simple guidelines to keep in mind:

- **Find Your Child's Ideal Posture:** You've probably told your child to stand up straight when they're slouching, but in reality, maintaining proper posture is a bit more flexible. Our therapists will help your child find their particular ideal posture, which will help them keep their body aligned throughout the school day, whether standing, sitting, or slinging around a backpack.
- **Weigh That Backpack:** Our therapists suggest your child's backpack shouldn't weigh more than 10-15% of their body weight. If it does, our therapists can offer strategies to help lighten the load.

- **Know How to Wear a Backpack Properly:** The bulk of a backpack's weight should rest on the middle of your child's back rather than their shoulders. The bottom of the pack should line up with your child's waist, and they should be able to lift the straps without moving the pack itself. We'll make sure everything is correct!

### **ADD A VISIT TO THERAPY SOLUTIONS TO YOUR START-OF-SCHOOL LIST!**

We know the start of fall is a busy time, but a visit to our occupational therapists will help keep your child free from any backpack-related pain—which means you won't have to schedule any doctor's appointments in the future.

**Call us today to schedule your appointment!**

### **TIPS TO EASE YOUR CHILD'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL ANXIETY**

- A week or two before school, start preparing children for the upcoming transition by resuming school-year routines, such as setting a realistic bedtime and selecting tomorrow's clothes. Creating consistency in their schedule helps bind anxiety by reducing uncertainty and providing a sense of control.
- Arrange play dates with one or more familiar peers before school starts. Research shows that the presence of a familiar peer during school transitions can improve children's academic and emotional adjustment.
- Visit the school before the school year begins, rehearse the drop-off and spend time on the playground or inside the classroom if the building is open. Have your child practice walking into class while you wait outside or down the hall.
- Come up with a prize or a rewarding activity that the child could earn for separating from mom or dad to attend school.
- Validate the child's worry by acknowledging that, like any new activity, starting school can be hard but soon becomes easy and fun.

**SCHEDULE YOUR  
APPOINTMENT  
TODAY!**

**701.483.1000**



## **HELP YOUR CHILD GET READY FOR THE FALL SPORTS SEASON!**

If you have a student-athlete, you're probably already thinking about the upcoming sports season, especially as pre-season training kicks into gear. But while the fall sports season brings plenty of excitement and competition, you might also worry about your child's injury risk.

Fortunately, we offer athletic training at Therapy Solutions. Our certified athletic trainers can help your child prepare for this year's sports season with customized conditioning programs designed to help them develop healthy habits, improve areas of weakness, and, most importantly, prevent injury.

We can also work with you to help you understand the signs and symptoms of common sports injuries, including concussions—young athletes are significantly more likely to suffer a concussion than non-athletes. And if your child does suffer a sports injury, we're here to provide expert rehabilitation.

### **CALL US TODAY TO LEARN MORE!**

A good conditioning program, including general performance tips like staying hydrated, is key in helping your child avoid injuries and thrive during their school sports career. The athletic trainers at Therapy Solutions will help your child find the best program for their needs.

**Schedule an appointment with us today to learn more.**



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# HEALTHY RECIPE

## STUFFED PEPPER CASSEROLE

Prep Time: 10min • Cook Time: 25min • Servings: 6



Lori Weiler (Billing Specialist) tried a new recipe that she really enjoyed and wanted to share. Check out the recipe below for an easy Stuffed Pepper Casserole that is made with only SIX ingredients and ONE skillet!

### Ingredients:

- 375g ground Italian sausage casings removed, one small package
- 2 cups chopped bell peppers
- 2 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup salsa or tomato sauce
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 1 cup long grain white rice rinsed
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

### Directions:

1. In a large skillet, brown Italian sausage. Add peppers and cook until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes
2. Add broth and use a wooden spoon to scrape any browned bits off the bottom of the pan.
3. Add salsa, salt and pepper.
4. Rinse rice well under cold water and add to skillet.
5. Stir well and bring to a simmer. Cover, reduce heat slightly, and simmer for 15-20 minutes until rice is cooked through.
6. Sprinkle with cheese, cover and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

## WRITE YOUR OWN SUCCESS STORY!

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Open your smart phone to the camera app
2. Center the QR code above in the frame (this will take you directly to our Google Review Page)
3. Tell us how we did



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

### EMILY CARDA



We would like to welcome Emily Carda to our Therapy Solutions Team!

Emily graduated from the University of Mary in April with a Master's degree in Athletic Training. While working toward her degree, she completed her clinical experience in a variety of settings, from high school to collegiate programs. Emily also completed an internship with the ACL White Sox.

Emily is originally from Lambert, Montana, and moved to Dickinson to begin her career with Therapy Solutions in June. As a member of the Therapy Solutions team, she will be providing game coverage and assisting with occupational health testing. In her spare time, Emily enjoys exercising and relaxing in her hammock.

## IN THE COMMUNITY:

### RUSS FAST

Did you know that just one blood donation can save the lives of up to three people?

Russ Fast (Mental Health Counselor) took part in this generous act by donating blood in July. He is a great example of Therapy Solutions' Mission Statement, which is:

*"To bring hope and healing into the world by bringing hope and healing to clients, co-workers, and self."*

Thank you, Russ, for bringing hope and healing into our community!



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