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BACK TO SCHOOL AUGUST 2007 NEWSLETTER

WHAT'S NEW?

- *Lee-Ann's new Saturday hours are now 9:00 am to 2:30 pm*
- *Rates increase becomes effective on 1 September 2007*

Having been a patient at the Back to Health Wellness Centre since 1998, Lee-Ann began working Saturdays there in August 2003, shortly after graduating from the Algonquin massage program. It's now time to move on, but valuable experience has been gained, terrific people have been met and worked with (therapists, staff and patients), and the owner's goodwill and flexibility has been much appreciated over the years. Thanks 'Back to Health', and I wish all of you all the best!

Every year in late August, when the air turns just slightly cooler, the shadows get noticeably longer, and the Ex is packed up and gone from Lansdowne ... I still get that "back to school" feeling! Happily, I'm not among the thousands of **kids and adult students** getting ready for September, but for those of you who are ... here are some helpful tips to consider when shopping.

Back Packs

Look for wide padded shoulder straps, lightweight construction, padded back, multiple compartments, and a waist strap. All of these components help distribute the content weight more evenly and rest more comfortably on the body. But regardless of how well a pack is constructed, carry only a **maximum weight** of 10 -15% of your own body weight – use your scale to measure the load. Carrying more than this can pull your shoulders back, which you compensate for by hunching forward your upper back and bending at the hips – this can create postural problems and pain. It should go without saying, but often a reminder is necessary ... wear the pack on both shoulders, and use the waist strap! Looking "cool" with it slung over one shoulder is only fine if there's nothing in it! Parents ... this is particularly important for your children whose bodies and bones are still "soft", malleable, and developing. Back packs on wheels are another option which can be convenient, however not on stairs or in the wintertime, so consider the usage carefully. You'll also want to make sure the handle is long enough that you're not bumping your own feet or dropping your shoulder down to drag it along. The framework & construction of these packs can be considerably heavier than a regular one, so take this into consideration as well if there are times that you will need to put it on your back.

Books

When reading and studying, use a document holder or book holder to hold your reading materials upright – this reduces strain on your shoulders and neck by allowing them to be free and in neutral positioning. If you purchase your books, and they're quite heavy to lug back & forth, consider taking them to a printer to have them split and coil bound into smaller volumes. Even 3 hole punching and storing in a binder can be another solution, so that you can take only just the needed sections with you.

Try to use your locker or desk to store heavy items and avoid carrying them unnecessarily ... laptops, video games, cd players and other items can add pounds to the pack and pain on the back! Bring only the necessary books for home work – some planning may be required!



I went to the Montreal Science Centre in July to check out Body Worlds 2 ... an exhibit of plastinated cadavers in a variety of poses and positions. It was fascinating, educational, and highly recommended!!