



## Mind Your Posture: Bags

*Advice from the British Chiropractic Association on the dangers of that big bag!*

*Large handbags are a fashion must but the British Chiropractic Association warns that they can pose a risk to posture and could potentially cause or contribute to back problems. Large bags can weigh up to 3kgs before anything gets put in it and this only gets worse as the user loads it up. Also, a larger bag is more unwieldy and more difficult to deal with. Heavy big bags can cause neck and shoulder strain as well as the long term effects on posture.*

### Essential advice: Keep it light

- The lighter you keep your bag the better, especially if you have to carry it about all day. Check the contents of your bag(s) each day and only carry those items you need for the day ahead – it is surprising how many people carry unnecessary weight in their bags.
- There is no 'maximum' weight that a bag should weigh, as it all depends on the size and strength of the person and the style of bag used. Bags that distribute weight more evenly across the back will put less strain on the body, so something like a rucksack is always best.
- The ideal bag for your computer is a rucksack, carried on both shoulders and the straps adjusted so that the bag is held close to your back.
- If using a single strap bag/briefcase, buy one with a longer strap, so you can wear it close to you with the strap over one shoulder and the bag or case under the other arm. Remember to keep your shoulders relaxed.

- Avoid holding a bag with long straps high up in the crook of your arm or down towards your knees as this will put an uneven load on your body.
  
- If you use a 'wheeled' mini case, push it instead of pulling as this puts less strain on your back and make sure the handle extends long enough to prevent you from stooping.
  
- If you have a 'shopping' style bag it is better to carry two bags, one in each hand to distribute the weight more evenly. Remember this when you are carrying your shopping as well.

*Further information about chiropractic can be obtained by logging on to [www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk](http://www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk)*

*For further information contact the  
British Chiropractic Association on 0118 950 5950*