

New Survey reveals Mums blame back pain on children and buggies

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Children are a pain in the back!

New survey reveals that 83% of Mums suffer back pain directly related to caring for young children

A new survey* conducted by Maclaren Buggys and BackCare, 'The Charity for Healthier Backs', has revealed that 83% of Mums suffering from back pain believe it has been caused or exacerbated by their children. Mums cite pregnancy as well as the day-to-day lifting and carrying of their children as the main reasons but the survey highlighted a significant proportion of these mums (73%) also link back pain to pushing, folding or lifting pushchairs. Sash Newman, Chief Executive for BackCare comments "A pushchair is one of the most important pieces of baby equipment a parent buys – they will be using it constantly for years, not just months. If you choose one that has the wrong handle height for you, is too heavy, or is difficult to fold and lift then you could be storing up some real problems for the future."

In response to the survey, Backcare has joined forces with Maclaren to create a 'Top Ten Tips' providing advice on what to look for when choosing the right pushchair plus general tips on how to care for your back when looking after young children. These 'tips' are below and are on the Maclaren website at: <http://www.maclarenbaby.com/gb/backcare>

The survey reveals just how often women are using their pushchairs:

- 84% of women are using their pushchairs up to 3 times a day
- 91% are folding or unfolding them up to 3 times a day
- 87% are pushing them between three and ten miles a week.
- 47% are frequently lifting them in and out of the car

Adds Sash, "With such high usage all parents should consider the effects of a pushchair on their back and look for features that promote good back health – not just one that looks good or is used by a celebrity and hopefully our 'Top Ten Tips' will help women make the right choice for them." She continues, "When choosing a pushchair women should be looking for good handle height – too short and you'll be bending your back. The frame design should allow you to take a full stride, it should also be light to lift and easy to fold. We have found all these elements in Maclaren Buggys."

Jo Ebdon, Marketing Manager at Maclaren comments, "87% of parents push their buggies between 3-10 miles per week. That's a lot of regular use so it's important for parents to be comfortable. All our buggies have ergonomically optimised handles that keep parents' arms in a good pushing position and therefore their head, neck and back in correct alignment. Our unique angled A-frame design also ensures parents can take nice large steps without the risk of kicking the back of the buggy when walking." She continues, "The survey also highlighted the importance of handle height to Mums. Maclaren buggies have a good range of handle heights at 104 - 114 cm (41-45"). Plus our Techno XT and XLR models also have

height adjustable handles, for increased flexibility and comfort.“

This care for women is rooted in the Maclaren design. Back in 1965, Owen Maclaren, a former test pilot and aeronautical engineer, saw his daughter struggling with her bulky, cumbersome pram and was inspired to design something more user-friendly. He created a portable, lightweight (just 3kg/6lbs) yet sturdy buggy for her with a unique umbrella-fold mechanism. Thus the first Maclaren buggy was born and went onto revolutionise baby transport and become an iconic design.

The company has continued in this innovative vein and today each buggy is ergonomically optimised to promote comfort and good posture. Jo adds “We make our frames from strong, but lightweight aluminium and we have the lightest buggy on the market – the Volo, weighing in at just 4.0kg. In addition all our buggies have a 5-second one-hand fold for ease of use and what’s more we’re so confident in the design and quality, every one is now eligible for our unique Sovereign Lifetime Warranty™.

TOP TEN TIPS FOR MUMS ON HOW TO LOOK AFTER THEIR BACKS

1. Look for a buggy with good handle height to keep yours arms in a good pushing position - this will help keep your head, neck and back in the correct alignment.
2. When pushing your buggy you should keep your shoulders down and relaxed and your elbows in.
3. Make sure the buggy you choose has a frame that allows you to swing your legs fully in front when walking.
4. Opt for a lightweight buggy, especially if you are always lifting it in and out of the car.
5. Make sure your buggy is easy to fold/unfold.
6. When lifting your child try not to bend over, instead bend at the knees and squat next to your baby. Hold your baby close to you and straighten up from the knees. ‘Bend your knees, not your back’ is the key to lifting small children.
7. If you are picking up a toddler, put one foot in front of the other, bend at your knees and encourage them to ‘walk’ up your front leg.
8. Avoid carrying your child on one hip – instead carry them in front of your body with their legs around your hips.
9. Exercise your back regularly – many exercises and activities can help you keep your back fit and healthy. Yoga, walking and swimming are particularly popular.
10. Use a well-designed backpack, such as the one BackCare has available** that spreads the weight evenly over your shoulders to carry your baby equipment - not a single sling bag.

Please note the aforementioned tips do not constitute medical advice and information displayed on maclarenbaby.com should not be used to replace medical advice received from qualified (healthcare) professionals, Maclaren is not in a position to recommend any specific treatment, product or therapy.

Sources:

* Conducted on www.babyexpert.co.uk, www.thinkbaby.co.uk and www.babyworld.co.uk in January 2009, among 1206 volunteer women respondents.

** BackCare has designed a range of back packs to help you protect your back and make a difference to your posture and performance. More information on this unique back pack can be found at www.backcare.org.uk or by calling 0208 977 5474.

For further information, images or samples please contact:

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Maclaren stockists details: call 01327 841 310 or visit www.maclarenbaby.com

For further information on Backcare or to obtain a copy of its information booklet 'Back care, pregnancy and children' visit www.backcare.org.uk or call 0208 977 5474.

EDITORS NOTES:

Maclaren Buggys are eligible for Maclaren Sovereign Lifetime Warranty™, the world's first global lifetime warranty, when parents register online at maclarenbaby.com within 45 days of purchase.

Maclaren is committed to safeguarding the environment by acting in a socially responsible manner and by adhering to the principles of: reduce, reuse and recycle.

About Maclaren: Owen Maclaren, a former test pilot and aeronautical engineer, was inspired by the birth of his first grandchild to invent the umbrella-fold buggy. His portable, lightweight yet sturdy invention liberated parents from the bulky, cumbersome pram, revolutionising baby transport and becoming an iconic design. The company he created continues to lead the industry in innovation, quality and design, offering high performance, stylish wheeled goods, accessories, toys and organic, holistic personal care products for mother and baby. Maclaren Europe Limited has its headquarters at its original home in Long Buckby, England. Maclaren USA Inc. headquarters are in South Norwalk, Connecticut. A global brand, Maclaren is pleased to support global and local charities affecting the health and well being of families through organisations such as The Hunger Project, Kids in Distressed Situations, Inc. and Baby Buggy.

About BackCare: The charity for healthier backs (Charity registered as the National Back Pain Association, charity no.256751). BackCare (registered in 1968 as the National Back Pain Association) is an independent national charity that helps people manage and prevent back pain by providing information, promoting self help, encouraging debate and funding research into better back care. BackCare represents people with back pain, a broad range of health professionals treating back pain, researchers and employers and is uniquely placed to act as a conduit for information exchange and debate; the charity has

extensive links with the NHS, Government Departments, industry and other voluntary organisations which enables it to have a say in policy formation and promotion of best practice in managing back pain. Back pain is a major health problem, affecting approximately 30 million people in the UK - over half of the adult population. Over the course of a year, around 3.5 million people experience back pain for the first time and for 3.1 million people their pain lasts throughout the whole year. It affects men and women equally. Persistent back pain, in particular, has a serious impact on people's lives. It frequently reduces people's quality of life and adversely affects their family, social and working lives. When the direct healthcare costs and the costs of sick leave and early retirement are combined, the total cost of back pain is three times greater than the corresponding costs for all forms of cancer.

BackCare's activities include:

- * Operation of a telephone helpline 0845 1302704
- * Sponsorship of research into the causes, management and prevention of back pain
- * Publication of a quarterly magazine covering topical issues on back pain and back care
- * Provision of information through standard reference works, factsheets, booklets, audiotapes, videos, an email helpline and website www.backcare.org.uk