

Patient Information Leaflet

CAR SEATS AND TRANSPORTING YOUR BABY

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Premature babies, small babies and babies with cardiac/respiratory conditions should spend as short a time as possible in a baby car seat. For these babies correct positioning is crucial to protect their airway and breathing.

Car seats must only be used during travel, and travel must be minimised in the first few months of life. Car journeys should be kept to a minimum.

You must by law have your baby in a car seat for transportation in a car.

Make sure you buy a rear facing car seat which can be used until your baby is 9 months old or weighs about 9 kg.

No baby should be placed in the front seat of a car with an airbag unless the airbag has been switched off.

Make sure you know how to adjust the harness so that it straps the baby in firmly. The harness must fit baby snugly and no more than one finger should fit between the harness and the baby's collarbone. Detachable head supports are available for most car seats if needed.

Make sure you know how to secure the seat in the car properly and securely.

If the weather is cold place a blanket over your baby in the car once you have checked baby and car seat are securely strapped in. If your baby is wearing a snowsuit style coat remove this before securing baby in the seat as the padding prevents baby from being held securely and alters baby's position in the seat as well as making it difficult for you to adjust baby's temperature during your journey.

When arriving at your destination baby should be taken out of the car and placed into a cot or pram.

If your car seat is second hand ensure that the car seat has never been in a car accident.

You should not smoke when in the car with your baby as passive smoking increases your baby's risk of developing respiratory illnesses like croup, asthma and bronchitis.

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