

# First Ride, Safe Ride



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Research shows that a correctly used child safety seat reduces the risk of fatality by 71 per cent and the risk of serious injury by 67 per cent. Safe Start, the injury prevention program of BC Children's Hospital has developed this resource to support postpartum nurses to ensure baby's first ride home is a safe one.

Parents can obtain information regarding child passenger safety by calling the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation at

**1-877-247-5551**

or

**[www.childseatinfo.ca](http://www.childseatinfo.ca)**



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# Infant-only seats

- Best practice is an infant-only seat for newborn babies. Convertible seats' lowest harness slots are often too high.
- The shape of an infant-only seat's shell offers a better fit for a newborn baby
- The seat should:
  - be originally purchased in Canada
  - not have expired--usually 5 to 7 years after date of manufacture
  - not have been involved in a crash
  - include the instruction booklet
  - not have been recalled
  - never be placed in front of an airbag
  - fit the baby, fit the vehicle and be used correctly every ride



*Infant -only Seat*



*Convertible Seat*

# Positioning Baby in an Infant-only Car Seat Checklist

- Is baby free of bulky clothing? Blankets can be placed over baby after they are buckled in.
- Is baby's buttocks and shoulders placed at the back of the car seat?
- Are baby's legs on either side of the crotch strap?



# Positioning Baby in an Infant-only Car Seat Checklist

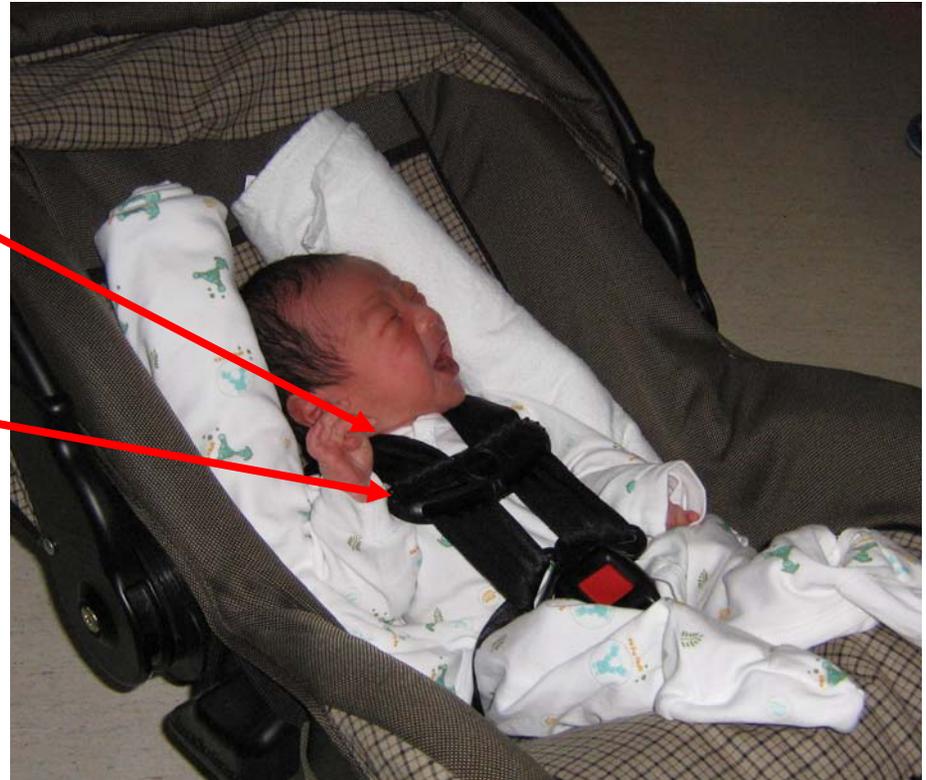
- There is no added padding behind, under or between harness straps and baby.
- Rolled receiving blankets or small towels alongside baby's head can be used if the head hugger that is manufactured with seat does not secure baby's head?
- There are no after-market inserts such as sleeping bags, head huggers not manufactured with the seat, etc. These items do not meet any safety standards and can cause slack in the harness straps.



# Harnessing Baby in an Infant-only Car Seat Checklist

- Are harness straps slots used at or slightly below baby's shoulders? (Usually the lowest slots for a newborn baby are used)
- Is the harness clip at baby's armpit level
- Are the harness straps snug? (only one adult finger should fit between the straps and baby's shoulder and unable to pinch any webbing between thumb and forefinger.)

*This is not a complete list. Parents should always read their car seat instructions and car owner's manual.*



# Installing an Infant-only Car Seat in Vehicle Checklist

- The infant-only seat is rear-facing and not in front of an airbag?
- Safest position for a car seat is the middle rear seat of the vehicle provided it can be installed securely and doesn't interfere with the front vehicle seats.
- The car owner's manual and the car seat instruction booklet have been checked to determine the correct use of the seat belt system or the Universal Anchorage System (UAS).
- In most cases, the handle is lowered behind the back of the car seat – check the car seat instructions.



Most infant-only seats are installed into a base which is fastened to the vehicle seat using the seat belts or the Universal Anchorage System (UAS).



# Proper Recline of an Infant-only Car Seat in Vehicle Checklist

- ❑ The back of the car seat is reclined to 45 degrees from vertical so baby's head and body lie back comfortably.

base adjuster



- ❑ The recline is corrected by lowering the base adjuster or by placing a cut "pool noodle" or rolled towel at the vehicle seat crease.

pool noodle



*Incorrect level*



# Base Stability Checklist

- The base is properly secured and has been checked by pulling side to side.
- The base does not move side to side more than one inch.
- The base cannot be pulled away from the vehicle seat back

*Note: It is acceptable to have some movement at the back of the base.*



# Common Mistakes

- Harness too loose
- Harness in wrong slots
- Harness clip too low or too high
- Seat belt/UAS too loose
- Car seat is too upright



# Child Passenger Safety Resources

## **Safe Start (BC Children's Hospital): (604) 875-3273**

- Responds to child passenger safety questions including recall look-ups
- [www.bcchildrens.ca/safestart](http://www.bcchildrens.ca/safestart)

## **BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation: 1-877-247-5551**

- Responds to child passenger safety questions
- Child passenger safety laws
- [www.childseatinfo.ca](http://www.childseatinfo.ca)

**Transport Canada: 1-800-333-0371**

