

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

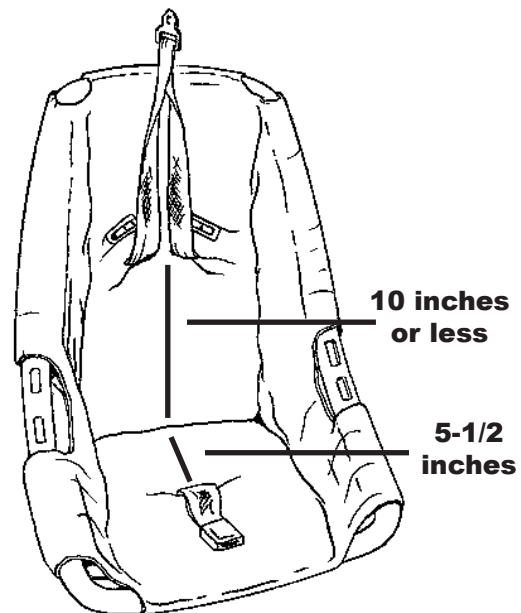
# Car Seats for Small Infants

Every baby needs to go home from the hospital in a car seat. Even if your baby came early, or is very small, you can get a car seat or car bed that is the right size.

## How to choose a car seat

Infant-only car seats work best for small babies (5-1/2 pounds or less). Look for a seat that:

- Meets federal safety standards. The box or booklet that comes with the seat will say that it does.
- Is made for a small baby. Some car seats are for babies who weigh 5 pounds or more. Do not use them for a baby that weighs less than 5 pounds.
- Has more than one harness slot position.
- Measures less than 5-1/2 inches from the crotch strap to the back of the seat, and less than 10 inches from the bottom seat cushion to the lowest harness slot. Take a ruler to the store with you before you buy the car seat.



**How to measure a car seat**

- Does not have a shield.
- Make sure your car seat has all its parts and instructions.
- Make sure your car seat meets federal safety standards. If there has been a recall on the seat, make sure the problem has been fixed. To find out if your car seat has been recalled, call the Auto Safety Hotline: 888-DASH-2-DOT.

## How to put your baby in the car seat

1. Put your baby's bottom and back flat against the car seat.

2. Use the lowest harness slot. The harness should be even with or below your baby's shoulders.

3. Tighten the harness. It should be snug on both shoulders. No more than one of your fingers should fit between the harness and your baby's collar bone.

4. Put the retainer clip at the level of your baby's armpit.

5. Put a rolled blanket, towel, or diaper on each side of your baby. This will help keep your baby's head from dropping to the side.

6. If your baby slides down, put a rolled diaper, wash cloth, or towel between the crotch strap and your baby's bottom.

- Do not put any extra padding between your baby's head or back and the car seat.

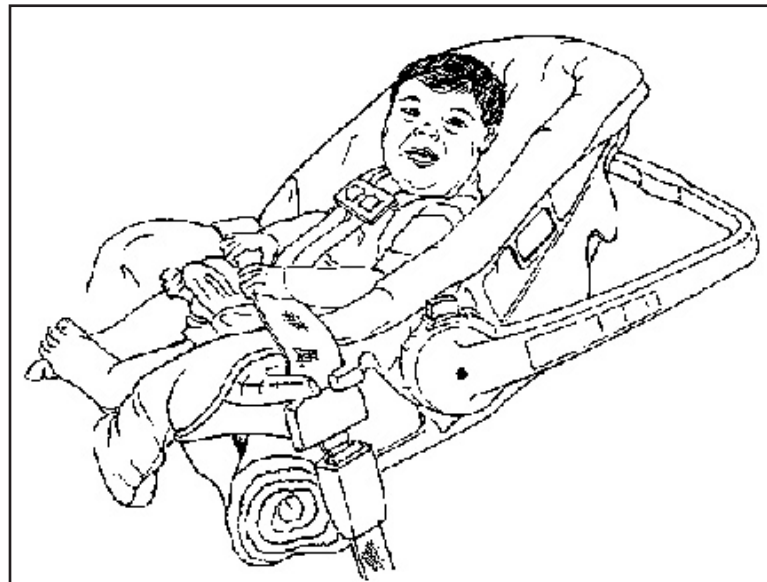


**Put a rolled blanket, towel, or diaper on each side of your baby.**

- If your baby uses an apnea monitor, put it on the floor or under the seat ahead.
- ☐ If your baby was born before 37 weeks, before you go home, a nurse will watch your baby in a car seat for 1 hour. (Check when done.)

## How to put the car seat in your vehicle

1. Make the car seat face the back of your car or truck. A baby must ride rear-facing until it is 1 year old and weighs at least 20 pounds.
2. Your baby is safest in the back seat. Never put a car seat in the front seat if there is a passenger air bag.
3. Tip the seat to a 45-degree angle. This angle will help keep your baby's head from falling forward. If your seat has a foot, use it to help get this angle. If not, use a rolled up towel or styrofoam pool noodle.
4. Put the carrying handle down to the back.



**The seat should sit at a 45-degree angle,  
with the handle down to the back.**

# How to use a car bed

Some infants with breathing problems or other special needs must lie flat. These babies may ride in a car bed instead of a car seat.

1. Put the car bed in the back seat.
2. Put your baby's head, toward the center of the vehicle, away from the doors.
3. Use the vehicle seat belt to tighten the car bed to the car.



**Use the vehicle seat belt to tighten the car bed to the car.**

yes  no Your baby should lie on his or her tummy.

yes  no Your baby should lie on his or her back.

## Now that you've read this:

- Show your nurse or doctor how you put your car seat in the car, and how you put your child in the car seat. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,  
 call your child's doctor or  call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-546-1400  
[www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com](http://www.phoenixchildrenshospital.com)

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

Thursday, November 9, 2006 • DRAFT in family review  
#492 • Written by Nancy Quay, MS, RN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain & Gregory Bishop



# The Emily Center

## Car Seats for Small Infants

Child Care/Health Promotion

Si usted desea esta información en español,  
por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

Name of Health Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: 492  
For office use: Date returned: \_\_\_\_\_  db  nb

## Family Review of Handout

**Health care providers:** Please teach families with this handout.

**Families:** Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read?  Yes  No

easy to read?  Yes  No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read?  Yes  No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading  
this handout?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any  
questions about the subject?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes  No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

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**Thank you for helping us!**