

A safe ride BEGINS WITH YOU

**Premature babies
need extra protection.**

Using the correct car seat is important for babies of all sizes, but premature infants could require some special care.

**BUCKLE UP RIGHT
FOR EVERY RIDE!**



Premature babies may need special care when riding in a car.

Most babies can ride safely in a rear-facing car seat. But some premature infants have trouble sitting up, which could cause problems with their breathing and heart rate.

- Before taking your baby home from the hospital, a trained hospital staff member will observe your infant in his car seat to make sure there are no problems with breathing, a slow heartbeat, too little oxygen in the blood, or other safety concerns.
- Look for a car seat with a low weight and length limit, and learn how to position your infant safely in the seat. Make sure the baby's chin does not flop forward, which could block breathing.
- The car seat should only be used in the car. Keep car trips as short as possible to reduce the amount of time the baby spends in the seat.
- Infants who cannot sit safely in a car seat, need to use a car bed made for babies who must lie flat until they can safely sit up.

Be sure to buckle up right:

- Follow all instructions for your child's car seat and your car to be certain the seat is buckled the right way. Make sure the car seat has all its parts and has never been in a crash. Be careful in using a previously owned seat.
- The car seat needs to be fastened tightly in your car and should not move more than one inch in any direction.
- Make sure the car seat has a five-point harness system (shoulder, hip and crotch straps). The harness needs to come out from the car seat even with or below the infant's shoulders. The chest clip should be at armpit level.
- The harness needs to be placed over the shoulders and between the baby's legs. The car seat straps need to fit snugly against the child. You should not be able to pinch the buckled strap between your fingers.



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
www.dhss.mo.gov

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER
Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD ALONE IN A CAR!

For more information, call 1-800-TEL-LINK
(1-800-835-5465)

PREEMIES