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One-Minute Car Seat Safety Check-up

Using a car seat correctly makes a big difference. Even the "safest" seat may not protect your child in a crash unless it is used correctly. So take a minute to check to be sure...

Does your car have a passenger air bag?

- An infant in a rear-facing seat should NEVER be placed in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger air bag.
- The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat.
- If an older child must ride in the front seat, move the vehicle seat as far back from the air bag as possible and buckle the child properly.

Is your child facing the right way for both weight and age?

- Infants should ride facing the back of the car until they have reached at least 1 year of age AND weigh at least 20 pounds (A and B).
- A child who weighs over 20 pounds AND is older than 1 year of age may face forward (C).

Has your child grown too tall for the convertible or forward-facing seat or has your child reached 40 pounds?

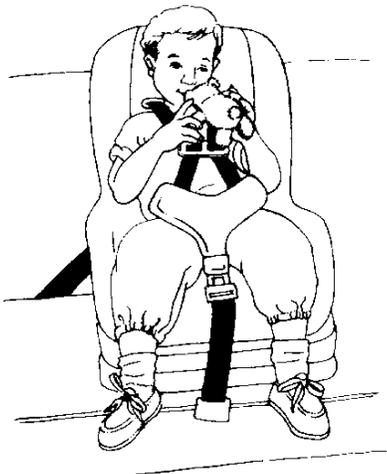
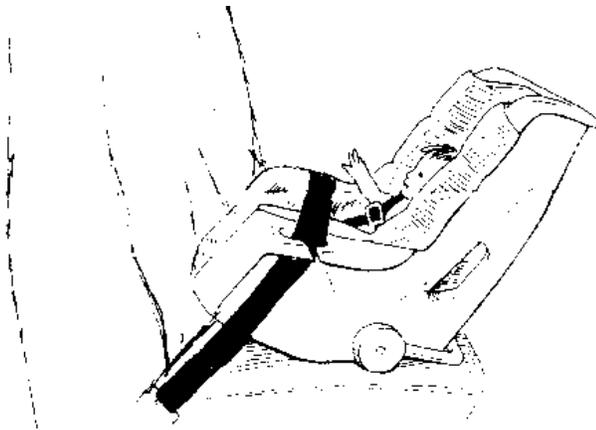
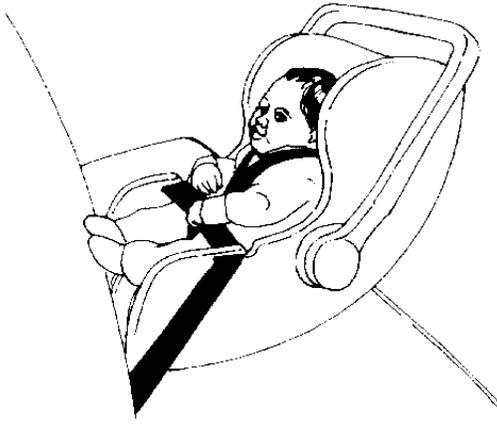
- Use a belt-positioning booster seat to help protect your child until he/she is big enough to use a seat belt properly.
- A belt-positioning booster seat is used with a lap and shoulder belt (D).
- Shield boosters, used only with lap belts, are not safe for children over 40 pounds. Children under 40 pounds should use a convertible or forward-facing seat. Shield booster should only be used without the shield with a lap/shoulder belt.

Have you tried the car seat in your vehicle?

- Not all car seats fit in all vehicles.
- When the car seat is installed, be sure it does not move side-to-side or toward the front of the car.
- Be sure to read the section on car seats in the owner's manual for your car.

Is the seat belt in the right place and pulled tight?

- Route the seat belt through the correct path (check your instructions to make sure)
- Kneel in the seat to press it down, and pull the belt tight.
- A convertible seat has two different belt paths, one for infants and one for toddlers.
- Check the owner's manual for your car to see if you need to use a locking clip or a tether to keep the safety seat secure.



Is the harness snug; does it stay on your child's shoulders?

- The shoulder straps of the car seat go in the lowest slots for infants riding backward, and in the highest slots for children facing forward.
- The chest clip should be placed at armpit level (C) to keep the harness straps on the shoulders.
- Harnesses should fit snugly against your child's body. Check the instructions on how to adjust the straps.

Do you have the instructions for the car seat?

- Read the directions carefully and keep them with the car seat. You will need them as your child gets bigger.
- Be sure to send in the registration card that comes with the car seat. It will be important in case your car seat is recalled.

Has your child's car seat been recalled?

- Call the Auto Safety Hotline (1-888-DASH-2-DOT) for a list of recalled seats that need repair.
- Be sure to make any necessary repairs to your car seat.

Has your child's car seat been in a crash?

- If so, it may have been weakened and should not be used, even if it looks all right.
- Call the car seat manufacturer if you have questions about the safety of your seat.

This information should not be used as substitute for the medical care and advice of your child's physician. Health related topics found on the Andorra Pediatrics web site should not be used for diagnosing purposes or be substituted for medical advice. As with any new or ongoing treatment, always consult your professional healthcare provider before making any changes in treatment or beginning any new treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.