

Free Child Car Seat Inspections

Statistics show that at least four out of five car seats are used incorrectly.

To ensure that your child's car seat is installed properly, schedule an appointment today. A Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) will check your installation free-of-charge. Inspections are regularly conducted at IU Health Arnett Hospital.

Important Things to Remember

- Make an appointment to get your car seat checked.
- Get your car seat checked three weeks before your due date.
- If you do not know the history of a car seat, do not use it. Avoid secondhand shops and yard sales.
- Check manufacturer date on seat. Cannot be more than six years old.
- Avoid after market products and items not manufactured with the seat such as toys, mirrors and headrests.
- Avoid heavy coats, snowsuits and buntings in the car seat.
- Be sure the seat is the right kind for your baby. Four pound babies cannot go home in a 5 pound-or-over car seat.
- Keep babies rear facing until age 2 and until they reach the upper weight limit of the seat. They are five times safer rear facing.

For older children:

- Keep them in the backseat until 13 years of age.
- Buckle them in with a five-point harness until they reach the upper weight limit of the harness.
- Place them in a booster seat until 4 feet 9 inches tall and 8 years of age or older.

For more information or to get your car seat inspected, please contact IU Health Arnett Childbirth Education at 765.838.4670 or email childbirthed@iuhealth.org.

Bring the following items to your appointment:

- Your child's car seat
- Instruction manual for the car seat
- Primary vehicle in which the car seat is used
- Instruction manual for the vehicle
- Child to whom the seat belongs



Infant - Child Passenger Safety Information

PRE-BIRTH THROUGH AGE 13



Arnett Hospital

5165 McCarty Lane, Lafayette
765.448.8000 | 800.899.8448
iuhealth.org/arnett

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Car Seat Safety

Because motor vehicle accidents are the number one killer of children ages 1-14, it is important to transport children in the safest way possible. This sobering statistic reminds us that even if you're a careful driver, you can't eliminate the possibility of an auto accident. Child safety seats are made to properly restrain a child in the safest way possible. These guidelines highlight the car seats for use as children grow.

All new car seats meet government standards. It is important to purchase one that fits you and your child's needs. You should always consult the car seat's instruction manual for its height and weight limits and upgrade as the child surpasses these limits.

For installation, consult both the car seat and your vehicle's instruction manuals. Since 2002, most vehicles and car seats have been designed to use the Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system. LATCH-equipped car seats have connectors that fasten directly to special anchors in LATCH-equipped vehicles and can be used in place of seat belts for installation.

In your child's lifetime, your child will sit several ways and in several seats to ride in the safest way possible while in your vehicle. The best car seat is one that fits your child and your car and one that you will use correctly every time. Remember, children are safest when properly restrained in the back seat of the car. Never place a car seat in front of an air bag.

Car safety seats and safety belts can prevent injury and save lives when correctly used. Children should use car seats or booster until they fit properly in a seat belt, meaning the lap belt crosses their upper thighs and the shoulder belt lies across the shoulder, not the neck and face.

Rear-Facing Seats

For best protection, infants should be placed rear-facing in the back seat until they reach the height or weight limit of the particular seat, usually a 30, 33 or 35 pound limit. At minimum, keep infants rear-facing until age 2 and until the child reaches the upper weight limit of the seat. Seats should be placed at the angle indicated by the manufacturer and the harness straps should be at or below the shoulders. A five-point harness is safest. The chest clip should be at armpit level.

Forward-Facing Seats

Once children reach the upper weight limit of their rear-facing convertible seat, the car seat can be used forward-facing. Depending on the safety seat purchased, this may require purchasing a new seat specifically for forward-facing use. Sit children forward-facing, in a five-point harness, until they reach the upper height or weight limit for their particular seat. Harness straps should be in the slot at or above the child's shoulders and the chest clip should be at armpit level.

Booster Seats

Booster seats should be used after children outgrow their forward-facing seats and until the vehicle seat belt fits properly. According to Indiana state law, booster seats should be used until a child reaches 8 years of age. Booster seats must use the lap and shoulder belt. The lap belt should fit snugly on the lower hips or upper thighs of the child, not the abdomen, and the shoulder belt should fit over the shoulders and chest, not the neck.

Seat Belts

Once a child can sit with their back and hips against the vehicle back without slouching, a seat belt can be used. Children should be able to bend their knees easily over the front of the seat. All children age 13 and under should ride in the back seat.

How to Select a Car Seat

- Choose a seat that will fit within your vehicle.
- Select a car seat based on your child's weight and height.
- For children under 4, select a rear-facing car seat until they outgrow the seat's restrictions.
- For children ages 4-7, use forward-facing seat with a harness.
- After children outgrow a harness seat, select a booster seat that fits their size.
- Always get a new car seat when your child grows past their current seat's weight and height requirements.
- Never select a seat that is too big.

When Installing a Car Seat:

- Always read your car owner's manual and car seat manufacturer's instructions on how to install a car seat.
- If your car was manufactured after 2002, it is required have LATCH safety system. Consult your owner's manual to learn how to use the LATCH system.
- Register your car safety seat (new or used) with the manufacturer so you will be notified of recalls.
- Don't use both the LATCH system and the seat belt to strap the car seat down.
- Use the proper installation angle recommended for the car seat.
- Avoid placing a car seat in the front seat of a vehicle.