



Pediatric Clips

NURSING

Car Seat Safety By Lisa Jasin, MSN, RNC, CNP;
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Pediatric Nursing Clips by Pediatric Advanced Practice Nurses at Dayton Children's provides quick reviews of common pediatric conditions.

The Children's Medical Center of Dayton is the region's pediatric referral center for a 20-county area. As the only facility in the region with a full-time commitment to pediatrics, Dayton Children's offers a wide range of services in general pediatrics as well as in 35 subspecialty areas for infants, children and teens. We welcome your inquiries about services available – call 937-641-3666 or e-mail marketing@childrensdayton.org.

Experts you trust, caring for the children you love.

Children in Ohio between the ages of 4 and 7 and less than 4 feet 9 inches tall will be required to ride in a booster seat beginning October 2009. Ohio is the 44th state to enact a booster seat law. This will be a secondary offense, meaning a person could be cited if they are pulled over for a different offense.¹

The Ohio Department of Public Safety has proven more children die from traffic crashes each year than all other causes combined. Car seats have been found to reduce fatal injury dramatically in infants less than 1 year by 71 percent. Car seats reduce fatal injury in toddlers ages 1 to 4 years old by 54 percent.²

National Child Passenger Safety Week is September 12-18, 2009.³

GUIDELINES FOR CAR SAFETY SEATS

All children who are younger than 12 years old should ride in the back seat.

Infants to 1 year old

Infants from birth to 1 year old should be in the back seat and in a rear-facing car seat until they are 1 year old and 20 pounds.

Infant-only car seats are designed for infants up to 22 to 32 pounds. The seats are intended to be rear-facing and come with a handle for ease of carrying. They are typically small and may come with a base that is left in the car. The infant-only seat may be part of a stroller system.

Convertible seats can be used rear-facing and converted to forward-facing seats for older and bigger children. They come with either a five point harness which attaches at the shoulders, hips and between the legs, or a padded tray with shoulder straps

that swings down over the head and secures between the legs. Convertible seats are larger than infant-only seats and are not used to carry the child outside the car. They are able to be used for a longer period of time because they can convert to forward-facing. In a car with a front air bag, infants in a rear facing car seat must ride in the back seat. The impact of an air bag can seriously injure or kill an infant. Vehicle owner's manuals can be used to determine if an air bag can be turned off as well as if side air bags are present.^{4,5}

Toddlers to 4 year olds

Forward-facing toddler seats should be used for children who are between 1 year old and 20 pounds to 4 years old and 40 pounds.

Toddler seats are for children weighing 40 to 80 pounds depending on the model of seat being used. They are used in a forward-facing position with a harness. Tether systems are available on newer forward-facing car seats and the anchor to which they connect has been required in vehicles since September 2000. The tether keeps the car seat from moving too far forward in a crash.^{4,5}

4 to 8 year olds

Booster seats should be used in the back seat for children who are 4 years old until they are at least 8 years old and taller than 4 feet 9 inches.

Booster seats are recommended for children who have outgrown their forward-facing seat and are at least 4 years old. Children have outgrown their seat when they have met the maximum allowable weight or height recommended for the seat, shoulders are above the top harness slots or ears have reached the top of the seat. Booster seats should be used with

a lap and shoulder belt together to raise the child higher so the seat belt fits appropriately.^{4,5}

Children over 8 years old

Seat belts should be used for children that are 8 years old and older and 4 feet 9 inches and taller.^{4,5}

Premature infants

Premature infants should be evaluated in their car seats prior to discharge. If an infant is slumping or leaning to the side in a car seat, rolled blankets may be used for positioning after the infant is harnessed in the car seat. Rolls should never be placed under the car seat restraints. No product should be used under the restraint system of a car seat unless it was sold as part of the car seat.^{4,5}

CAR SEAT SELECTION

Car seat selection depends on the size of the baby as correct fit is the most important element. A used car seat is acceptable if it has a known history, has never been involved in a moderate or severe crash and has the manufacturer's sticker and manual. It should be checked to ensure it has not been recalled.^{4,5}

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

The American Academy of Pediatrics provides a list of currently manufactured car seats and weight recommendations: www.aap.org

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration website contains an ease of use rating system for car seats: www.nhtsa.gov

Car seat recall information: www.carseat.org

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REFERENCES

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3. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Child Passenger Safety. Available at: http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/template.MAXIMIZE/menuitem.9f8c7d6359e0e9bbb30811060008a0c/?javax.portlet.tpst=4427b997caacf504a8bdba101891ef9a_ws_MX&javax.portlet.prp_4427b997caacf504a8bdba101891ef9a_viewID=detail_view&itemID=ce45e2542a964110VgnVCM100002fd17898RCRD&viewType=standard. Accessed March 6, 2009.
4. AAP. Available at: www.aap.org. Accessed March 6, 2009.
5. SafetyBeltSafe USA. Available at: www.carseat.org. Accessed March 6, 2009.

FEATURED NURSE SPECIALISTS



LISA JASIN, MSN, RNC, CNP; SHANA THOMPSON, MSN, RNC, CNP; and SUSAN KERN, MSN, RNC, CNP, are the Neonatal Nurse Practitioners (NNP's) in the neonatology department at The Children's Medical Center of Dayton. Collectively, they have 67 years of experience as Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) nurses and 25 years of experience as NNP's.

The NNP's are responsible for the day-to-day medical management of NICU patients in collaboration with the neonatologist. They coordinate complex discharges and oversee referrals for follow-up of NICU patients to Synagis and other specialty clinics.

The NNP's are adjunct faculty at Wright State University School of Medicine and are responsible for much of the resident clinical education in the NICU. The NNP's provide education to the NICU staff, outreach education at referral hospitals and are clinical instructors for NNP students.

NEWBORN MEDICINE AT DAYTON CHILDREN'S

The Level III Regional Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Dayton

Children's receives seriously and/or critically ill newborns from a 20-county region in Ohio. The award-winning NICU provides family-centered care to the most fragile infants and their families. The calm, home-like atmosphere provides the perfect setting for optimal growth and healing. The entire NICU staff is experienced in and committed to the developmental needs of infants and the emotional needs of their families. They are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for support. Tours can be arranged for parents-to-be with a prenatal diagnosis that will necessitate admission to the NICU. For more information on Dayton Children's NICU, call 937-641-3040.



For further information about The Children's Medical Center of Dayton or its nursing program contact the nursing recruiter at 937-641-5372 or marketing@childrensdayton.org.



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