

Car Safety During Pregnancy

Should I wear a seat belt when I'm pregnant?

Yes, you should wear both the lap belt and the shoulder strap. In a car crash, seat belts are the best protection for you and your unborn child. Four out of five unborn babies who die in car crashes would have lived if their mothers had worn seat belts.

What's the right way to wear a seat belt when pregnant?

Lap belt:

- Buckle the lap belt below your belly so it fits snugly across your hips
- Never place the lap belt above or on your belly

Shoulder belt:

- Place the shoulder belt between your breasts and away from your neck
- Never place the shoulder belt behind your back or under your arm
- Pull the belt tight

Do I still need a seat belt if the car or truck has air bags?

Yes, you still need a seat belt. Do not turn off the air bags. They add extra protection.

How should I adjust my seat?

Move the front seat as far back as possible. Your breastbone should be at least 10 inches from the steering wheel if you are driving, and at least 10 inches from the dashboard if you are a passenger.

What else should I do to stay safe while driving?

Avoid distractions. That means:

- No talking on the phone
- No texting
- No eating
- No feeding children or handing them toys
- No combing your hair, putting on makeup, or other grooming
- No changing CDs or DVDs
- No looking at a GPS screen
- No using alcohol or other drugs (or riding with a driver who has used alcohol or other drugs)

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

<http://www.acog.org/-/media/For-Patients/faq018.pdf>

November 2014

This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.

This information provides a general overview and may not apply to everyone. Talk to your family doctor to find out if this information applies to you and to get more information on this subject. Copyright © 2014 American Academy of Family Physicians. Individuals may photocopy this material for their own personal reference, and physicians may photocopy for use with their own patients. Written permission is required for all other uses, including electronic uses.



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS