

Air Bag Safety

An air bag can save your life. However, air bags and young children do not mix. The following information will help keep you and your children safe.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

- The safest place for *all* infants and children under 12 years of age to ride is in the back seat.
- *Never* put an infant under 1 year of age in the front seat of a car with an air bag.
- Infants must always ride in rear-facing car seats in the back seat until they are at least 20 pounds AND 1 year of age.
- All children should be properly secured in car safety seats, booster seats, or shoulder/lap belts correct for their size.
- Seat belts must be worn correctly at all times by all passengers to provide the best protection.

What Parents Can Do

- Eliminate potential risks of air bags to children by buckling them in the *back* seat for every ride.
- Plan ahead so that you do not have to drive with more children than can be safely restrained in the backseat.
- For most families, installation of air bag on/off switches is not necessary. Air bags that are turned off provide no protection to older children, teens, parents, or other adults riding in the front seat.
- Air bag on/off switches should only be used if your child has special health care needs, your pediatrician recommends constant observation during travel, and no other adult is available to ride in the back seat with your child.
- If no other arrangement is possible and an older child *must* ride in the front seat, move the vehicle seat back as far as it can go, away from the air bag. Be sure the child is properly buckled. Keep in mind that your child may still be at risk for injuries from the air bag. The back seat is the safest place for children to ride.

From your doctor

