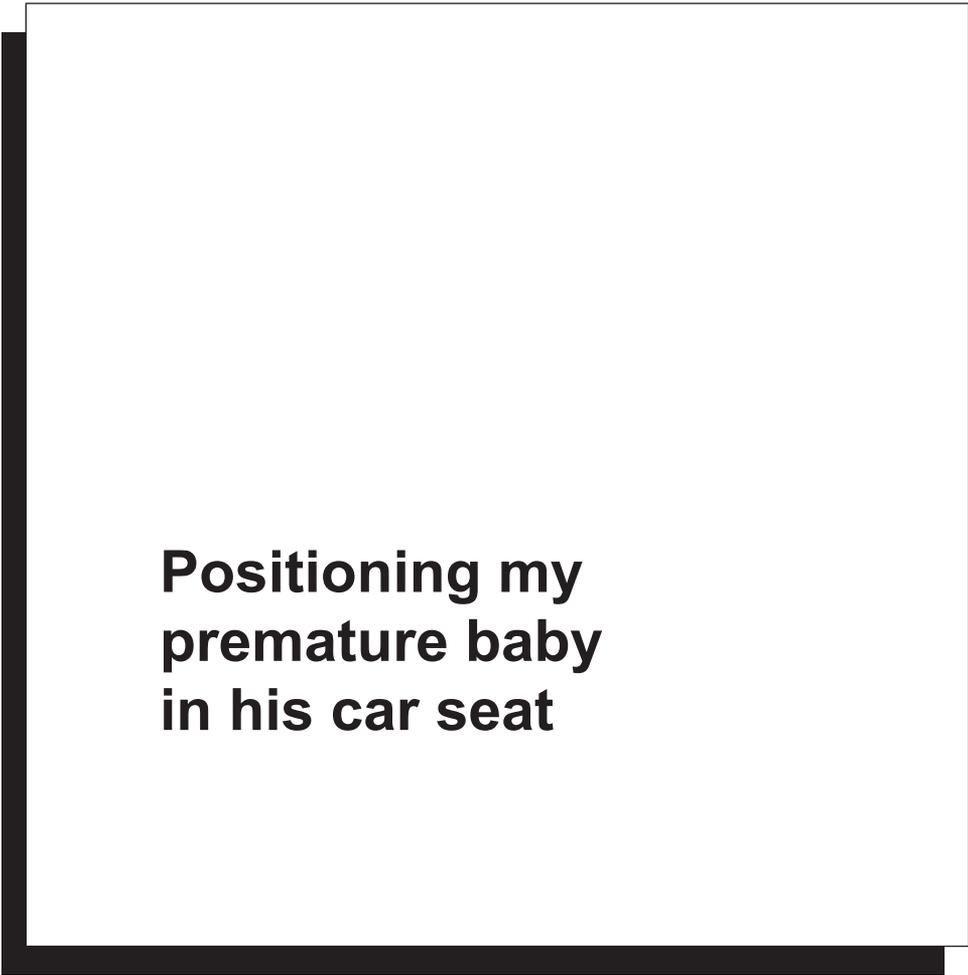




GUIDE



Positioning my premature baby in his car seat



The Ottawa | L'Hôpital
Hospital | d'Ottawa



Disclaimer

This is general information developed by The Ottawa Hospital. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified healthcare provider. Please consult your own personal physician who will be able to determine the appropriateness of the information for your specific situation.

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*Finally going home
Let's make it a safe trip
in a car seat.*

Which car seat should I purchase for my premature baby?

- The best car seat is an “infant only” car seat which meets Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.
- ***Avoid*** buying car seats with any kind of front shield.
- ***Avoid*** buying used car seats without knowing car seat history.
- Do not use feeding seats or household carriers as car seats since they are not strong enough to protect your baby in a crash.
- You must remember that even an “infant only” car seat may be too big for your baby. The companies make “infant only” car seats for babies that are bigger than 5 lb (2.5 kg). Please check with staff for seats less than 5 lb.
- Special positioning in the car seat will also help your baby breathe properly during travel.
- Your baby’s car seat should prevent him from slouching and should hold him in place during a crash.

- To meet these requirements the car seat should have a space of 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ cm (5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches) or less between the crotch strap and the seat. The shoulder strap slots should be located 25 cm (10 inches) or less above the seat bottom.
- See N.I.C.U./SCN staff for information.

How do I position my baby in the car seat?

- Dress your baby for the weather.
- Your baby's buttocks and back should be flat against the back of the car seat. Do not place any padding under the baby's bottom or at his back.
- Avoid bulky overclothes, bundling in a blanket or bunting bag.
- Position your baby safely in his car seat, then place extra blankets over him if needed.
- Your baby should fit ***snugly*** in his car seat. You may need to place rolled blankets or diapers along the side of your baby to prevent him from falling sideways.
- The strap between the legs should also fit ***snugly*** to prevent your baby from slipping down in the car seat. You may need to place a rolled blanket or diaper between the strap and his legs.

What should I know about the shoulder straps?

- The shoulder straps must be in the lowest slots on the back of the car seat.
- The harness must fit snugly against your baby's shoulders.
- Adjust and fasten the shoulder straps at the back of the car seat. Make sure only one finger fits between the straps and your baby's collar bone.
- Fasten the sliding harness retainer clip so it is against your baby's chest at armpit level and not under the chin.

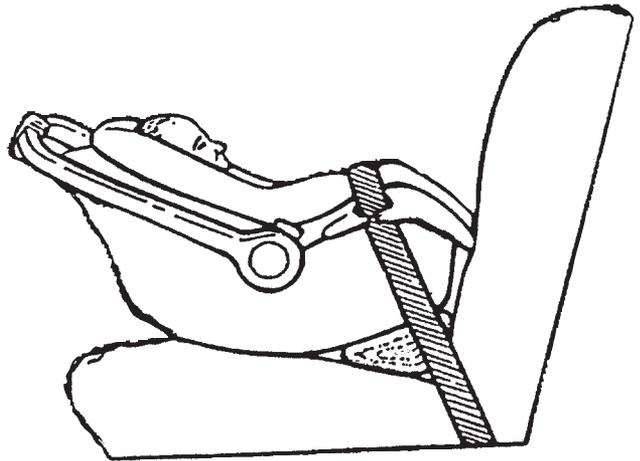
Can I use a head hugger in the car seat?

- Only if it came with the car seat. Otherwise, use rolled baby blankets to put around the baby's head.

How do I secure the car seat in the car?

- The best spot for your baby is in the center of the back seat. We suggest using a back seat mirror to monitor your baby in this position.
- An adult should always sit beside your baby while in the car.
- Your baby should be facing the back of the car until he reaches 9 kg (20 lb.), and can stand without help.

- **Never** place your baby in the front seat of a car with a passenger air bag.
- Recline your baby's car seat to a 45 degree angle to prevent his head from falling forward during travel. If needed, put a rolled blanket/towel/pool noodle **under the car seat** below the baby's feet.
- Fasten the car seat to the car with the car seat belt.
- Use a locking clip if indicated in the car manual.



Website

Transport Canada

www.tc.gc.ca/Roadsafety

Ministry of Transport Ontario

www.mto.gov.on.ca

For car seat inspection

www.ottawaparamedics.ca
under Initiative