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## Car safety seats help keep kids in vehicles safe



One of the most important jobs you have as a parent is keeping your child safe when your child is riding in a vehicle. A car seat helps to protect your child.

There are many different seats on the market, and many parents have a hard time choosing the right one.

The type of seat your child needs depends on things like your child's age, size, and needs. Here is more information from the **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)** about choosing the correct car safety seat for your child.

### Infants and toddlers: rear-facing seats

The AAP recommends that all infants ride rear facing starting with their first ride home from the hospital.

If you are expecting a baby, consider working with a certified passenger safety technician (CPST), before your baby is born, to ensure a safe ride home from the hospital. You can find a certified child passenger safety technician by going to the **National Child Passenger Safety Certification website** and clicking on the "Find a Tech" link by the search bar.

All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing seat as long as possible until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car safety seat manufacturer.

When babies outgrow their infant seat, a convertible seat should be installed facing the rear of the car. Most convertible seats will allow children to ride rear facing for 2 years or more. A CPST can help to ensure that your child's seat is properly installed.

#### Types of rear-facing seats

Three types of rear-facing seats are available: **rear-facing only**, convertible, and all-in-one. When children reach the highest weight or length allowed by the maker, they should continue to ride rear facing in a convertible or all-in-one seat.

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### Rear-facing-only seats

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all infants ride in a rear-facing seat. They should use that seat until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the maker of the car seat.
- Are small and have carrying handles.
- Usually come with a base that can be left in the car. The seat clicks into and out of the base so you don't have to install the seat each time you use it. Parents can buy more than one base for additional vehicles.
- Should be used only for a child's travel in a vehicle (not sleeping, feeding, or any other use outside the vehicle).

### Convertible seats (used rear facing)

- Can be used rear facing and, later, "converted" to forward facing for older children when they outgrow either the weight limit or the length limit for rear facing. This means the seat can be used longer by your child. Convertible seats are bulkier than infant seats, however, and they do not come with carrying handles or separate bases and are designed to stay in the car.
- Many have higher limits in rear-facing weight and height than those of rear-facing-only seats, a feature that makes convertible seats ideal for bigger babies and toddlers.



- Have a 5-point harness that attaches at the shoulders, at the hips, and between the legs.
- Should be used only for a child's travel (not sleeping, feeding, or any other use outside the vehicle).

### All-in-one seats (used rear facing)

- Can be used rear facing, forward facing, or as a belt-positioning booster. This means the seat may be used longer by your child as your child grows.
- Are often bigger, so it is important to check that they fit in the vehicle while they are rear facing.
- Do not have the convenience of a carrying handle or separate base. However, they may have higher limits in rear-facing weight and height than those of rear-facing-only seats, which makes all-in-one seats ideal for bigger babies and toddlers.

### Tips for installing rear-facing seats

- Always read the vehicle owner's manual and the car safety seat manual before installing the seat.
- Check with a CPST in your area who can help by going to the [National Child Passenger Safety Certification website](#) and selecting "Find a Tech" or visiting a state car inspection station. Find a station near you on their [website](#).
- Place the harnesses in your rear-facing seat in slots that are at or below your child's shoulders.
- Ensure that the harness is snug (you cannot pinch any slack between your fingers when testing the harness straps over the child's shoulders) and that the chest clip is placed at the center of the chest, even with your child's armpits.
- Make sure the car safety seat is installed tightly in with either lower anchors or a locked seat belt. Many car safety seats have an integrated lock-off system to keep the seat belt locked. If your seat has one, follow the maker's recommendations on how to use it. If you can move the seat at the belt path more than an inch side to side or front to back, it's not tight enough.

- Never place a rear-facing seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has an active front passenger airbag. If the airbag inflates, it will hit the back of the car safety seat, right against your child's head, and could cause serious injury or death.
- If you are using a convertible or all-in-one seat in the rear-facing position, make sure the seat belt or lower anchor webbing is routed through the correct belt path. Check the instructions that came with the car safety seat to be sure.
- Make sure the seat is at the correct angle, so your child's head does not flop forward. Check the instructions to find out the correct angle for your seat and how to adjust it if needed. All rear-facing seats have built-in recline indicators.
- Read the car seat manual and the vehicle's manual about whether the car safety seat may bump up against the car seat in front of it.



## Common questions

### What if my child's feet are touching the vehicle's seat?

- Parents should not worry over this. Children are very flexible and can easily find a comfortable position in a rear-facing seat. Injuries to the legs are very rare for children facing the rear.

### What do I do if my child slouches down or to the side in the car seat?

- You can try placing a tightly rolled receiving blanket on both sides of your child. Many makers allow the use of a tightly rolled small diaper or cloth between the crotch strap and your child, if necessary, to prevent slouching. Do not place padding under or behind your child or use any car safety seat insert unless it came with the seat or was made by the maker for use with that specific seat.

### Why should I dress my child in thinner layers of clothing before strapping them into a car safety seat?

- Bulky clothing, including winter coats and snowsuits, can compress in a crash and leave the straps too loose to restrain your child, leading to increased risk of injury. Ideally, dress your baby in thinner layers and wrap a coat or blanket around your baby over the buckled harness straps if needed. Visit the [American Academy of Pediatrics winter car safety page](#) to learn more.

### Do preemies need a special car seat?

A car safety seat should be approved for a baby's weight. Very small babies who can sit safely in a semi-reclined position usually fit better in rear-facing-only seats.

Babies born preterm should be screened while still in the hospital to make sure they can sit safely in a semi-reclined position. Babies who need to lie flat during travel may be able to ride in a car bed that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213. They should be screened again while in the hospital to make sure they can lie safely in the car bed.





### Never use a car seat that:

- **Is too old.** Look for the label showing the date the seat was made. Check with the manufacturer to find out how long it recommends using the seat.
- **Has any visible crack in it.**
- **Does not have a label with the date of manufacture and model number.** Without these, you cannot check to see if the seat has been recalled.
- **Does not come with instructions.** You need them to know how to use the seat. Instructions can be found on seat maker's websites or by contacting the maker.
- **Is missing parts.** Used car safety seats often come without important parts. Check with the manufacturer to make sure you can get the right parts.
- **Was recalled.** You can find out by calling the maker or contacting the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. You can also visit the NHTSA website.
- **Was in a moderate or severe crash.** Seats that were in a minor crash may still be safe to use, but some car safety seat makers recommend replacing the seat after any crash, even a minor one. The NHTSA considers a crash minor if all the following apply:
  - The crashed car could be driven away after the crash.
  - The door closest to the car safety seat was not damaged.
  - No one in the car was injured.
  - The airbags did not go off.
  - You can't see any damage to the car safety seat.



### More safety tips on taking your baby in your car

- Car seats, strollers, swings, infant carriers and infant slings are not recommended for routine sleep, particularly for infants younger than 4 months.
- When infants fall asleep in a car seat or other sitting device, remove them from the seat and move them to a crib as soon as is safe and practical.
- Always keep your child's safety straps buckled.
- Do not put the seat on a raised surface (for example, a table or shopping cart) because it may fall.
- It is not safe to use any add-on accessories not approved by the car seat maker, such as a bunting bag or head restraint.
- Never leave your child alone in the car.
- Look before you lock. Use memory aids to make sure a child is never forgotten in the car. For example, place your phone or bag in the back seat to avoid a memory lapse or have a rear facing mirror to view the child.



## HumanaBeginnings is here to help you and your baby

Our HumanaBeginnings® program is here to support you and your baby, before, during, and after delivery.

HumanaBeginnings care managers can help you with answers to your questions or requests for support. Reach a care manager by email or phone:

- Email: **SCMCDHumanaBeginnings@humana.com**
- Call: **866-432-0001 (TTY: 711)**, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., Eastern time.

## Online resources

1. American Academy of Pediatrics: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Car-Safety-Seats-Information-for-Families.aspx>
2. South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control: <https://scdhec.gov/health/child-teen-health/early-childhood-health/child-passenger-safety-program>
3. South Carolina Safety Inspection Stations: <https://scdhec.gov/health/child-teen-health/early-childhood-health/child-passenger-safety-program/child-passenger-safety-inspection-stations>
4. South Carolina-specific car seat safety laws: [https://scdps.sc.gov/buckleupsc/safety\\_seat\\_law](https://scdps.sc.gov/buckleupsc/safety_seat_law)

## Call If You Need Us

If you have questions or need help reading or understanding this document, call us at **866-432-0001 (TTY: 711)**. We are available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Eastern time. We can help you at no cost to you. We can explain the document in English or in your first language. We can also help you if you need help seeing or hearing. Please refer to your Member Handbook regarding your rights.

## Important!

**At Humana, it is important you are treated fairly.**

Humana Inc. and its subsidiaries do not discriminate or exclude people because of their race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, ancestry, ethnicity, marital status, religion, or language. Discrimination is against the law. Humana and its subsidiaries comply with applicable Federal Civil Rights laws. If you believe that you have been discriminated against by Humana or its subsidiaries, there are ways to get help.

- You may file a complaint, also known as a grievance:  
**Discrimination Grievances**, P.O. Box 14618, Lexington, KY 40512-4618.  
If you need help filing a grievance, call **866-432-0001** or if you use a TTY, call **711**.

- You can also file a civil rights complaint with the  
**South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Civil Rights Division**  
1801 Main Street, P.O. Box 8206, Columbia, South Carolina 29202,  
**888-808-4238, TTY: 888-842-3620, [civilrights@scdhhs.gov](mailto:civilrights@scdhhs.gov)**. Complaint form is available at [https://www.scdhhs.gov/sites/default/files/SCDHHS%20Civil%20Rights%20Discrimination%20Complaint\\_0.pdf](https://www.scdhhs.gov/sites/default/files/SCDHHS%20Civil%20Rights%20Discrimination%20Complaint_0.pdf).

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights**  
electronically through their Complaint Portal, available at  
<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/smartscreen/main.jsf>, or at **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, **800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)**. Complaint forms are available at <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ocr-cr-complaint-form-package.pdf>.

**Auxiliary aids and services, free of charge, are available to you.**  
**866-432-0001 (TTY: 711)**

Humana provides free auxiliary aids and services, such as qualified sign language interpreters, video remote interpretation, and written information in other formats to people with disabilities when such auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate.



Humana Healthy Horizons in South Carolina is a Medicaid product of Humana Benefit Plan of South Carolina, Inc.

Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you.

**866-432-0001 (TTY: 711)**

**English:** Call the number above to receive free language assistance services.

**Español (Spanish):** Llame al número que se indica arriba para recibir servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

**繁體中文 (Chinese):** 您可以撥打上面的電話號碼以獲得免費的語言協助服務。

**Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese):** Gọi số điện thoại ở trên để nhận các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí.

**한국어 (Korean):** 무료 언어 지원 서비스를 받으려면 위 번호로 전화하십시오.

**Français (French):** Appelez le numéro ci-dessus pour recevoir des services gratuits d'assistance linguistique.

**Tagalog (Tagalog – Filipino):** Tawagan ang numero sa itaas para makatanggap ng mga libreng serbisyo sa tulong sa wika.

**Русский (Russian):** Позвоните по вышеуказанному номеру, чтобы получить бесплатную языковую поддержку.

**Deutsch (German):** Wählen Sie die oben angegebene Nummer, um kostenlose sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zu erhalten.

**ગુજરાતી (Gujarati):** મફત ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ મેળવવા માટે ઉપર આપેલા નંબર પર કોલ કરો.

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**Português (Portuguese):** Ligue para o número acima para receber serviços gratuitos de assistência no idioma.

**日本語 (Japanese):** 無料の言語支援サービスを受けるには、上記の番号までお電話ください。

**Українська (Ukrainian):** Зателефонуйте за вказаним вище номером для отримання безкоштовної мовної підтримки.

**हिंदी (Hindi):** भाषा सहायता सेवाएं मुफ्त में प्राप्त करने के लिए ऊपर के नंबर पर कॉल करें।

**ខ្មែរ (Cambodian):** ហៅមកលេខទូរស័ព្ទខាងលើ ដើម្បីទទួលបានសេវាកម្មបកប្រែភាសាដោយមិនអស់ប្រាក់ ។