

The Pregnant Woman's Guide to Buckling Up

Your Top 5 Seat Belt Questions Answered

1 "I'm pregnant. Should I wear a seat belt?"

Yes. Doctors recommend it. In a crash, a seat belt is the best protection for both you *and* your unborn child.

2 "Should I adjust my seat?"

Yes. You should move the front seat back as far as possible. If you're driving, make sure that you can still comfortably reach the pedals. But always keep at least 10 inches between the center of your chest and the steering wheel cover or dashboard. As your abdomen grows during pregnancy, adjust your seat to maintain this 10-inch minimum.

3 "What if my car or truck has air bags?"

You still need to buckle up. Air bags are designed to work with seat belts, not replace them. Without a seat belt, you could be thrown into a rapidly opening frontal air bag, which could injure or even kill you and your unborn child. Also, if you're not buckled up, you could collide with other passengers or be ejected from the vehicle.

4 "Should I turn the air bag off if my vehicle has an ON-OFF air-bag-disabling switch?"

No. Doctors recommend that pregnant women wear seat belts and leave air bags turned on. Seat belts and air bags work together to provide the best protection for you and your unborn child.

5 "What's the right way to wear my seat belt?"

The shoulder belt should lay across your chest (between your breasts) and away from your neck.

Place the shoulder belt across your chest (between your breasts) and away from your neck.

Secure the lap belt *below* your belly so that it fits snugly across your hips and pelvic bone.

Never place the shoulder belt behind your back or under your arm.



Need more help?

Contact us

To learn more about seat belts, air bags, child safety seats (including where to find a free child seat inspection station near you), as well as other highway safety topics, call the DOT Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or visit the NHTSA Web site at www.nhtsa.gov.

Thanks to the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists for their review and input for this brochure.