

Anticipatory Guidance for Caregivers of Infants Needing the Infant Car Seat Challenge Test/Car Seat Tolerance Screen

General Guidance:

- Teach the caregiver that a car seat for infants must recline approximately 45 degrees (or as indicated by the car seat guidelines) in order to properly support the infant's head and neck. When the seat is installed in the vehicle rear-facing (for at least until the child is 2 years old), it still must be reclined. Teach the caregiver where to find the recline angle indicator/s on the car seat and make sure the recline and indicator are understood.
- Help the caregiver locate the car seat manual on the car seat and encourage the caregiver to read it carefully.
- Teach the caregiver how to properly place their infant in their rear-facing car seat, how to adjust the harness straps to fit, and how to tighten the straps snugly. If needed, teach how to use a rolled receiving blanket alongside the infant for lateral support. Have the caregiver practice with a "preemie" doll if necessary.
- Teach the caregiver that the infant must always be snugly harnessed while in the car seat, even when the seat is not used in the car.
- Discourage parents from keeping their infants in their car seats for extended time periods, including non-travelling time. For instance, limit car rides to less than 2-3 hours. If a longer ride is needed, have parents stop the ride and take the infant out of the seat for at least an hour prior to returning the infant to the car seat and continuing the ride.
- Make sure the caregiver is the last person to place the infant in the car seat and to secure the harness prior to discharge.
- Have an adult ride in the back seat of the vehicle next to the infant/car seat to monitor the infant for problems.
- Tell the caregiver that passing the ICSC test is no guarantee that the infant will not experience breathing problems in the future.
- Advise that infants with respiratory issues should not use other child seating devices and that most of these devices say "not for use for babies less than two months of age." (e.g., swings)

What to do if an infant fails the ICSC test in his/her own car seat?

- Explain that there is not one answer for why a baby might fail an ICSC test or one solution to get the baby home safely. More research is needed on these issues.

- Explain that the infant will be retested in 12-24 hours. If the infant does not fit appropriately in his/her car seat, encourage the caregiver to obtain a different seat that will provide a better fit. Again involve the caregiver in positioning the infant in the car seat for the test and check that the recline angle and harnessing is correct.

If the infant fails again but is otherwise healthy and approved for discharge:

- Obtain a car bed and show the parent how the car bed allows infants to travel lying flat. Explain that the ICSC test will be repeated in this seat. Help the caregiver locate the instruction manual and read it, and then practice using this seat.
- Refer the caregiver to a Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) to assist the caregiver with the installation of the car bed in the vehicle.

When is the infant ready for riding in a conventional car seat?

- Explain to the caregiver that the baby should have a follow up ICSC test in his/her own car seat in 2-4 weeks or when the infant outgrows the car bed or when the infant reaches normal birth age. Schedule an appointment and location for that service.

For more information, contact:

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www.MIEMSS.CPSHome.htm	www.mdkiss.org

