

# Your Unborn Child...

..is completely dependent on you, its mother, for safety and well-being. Most mothers-to-be know that diet, rest and exercise are important during pregnancy. What many don't realize is the importance of safety belts.

Safety belts are designed to save lives. In a traffic crash, a safety belt can save your life and the life of your unborn child.

The leading cause of fetal death in a car crash is death of the mother, and the fetal injury is closely related to the amount of injury to the mother.

You can't always prevent a car crash, but you can protect yourself and your baby by wearing your safety belt.

For more information about child passenger safety, contact the Ohio Department of Health, Division of Prevention, 246 N. High Street, 8th floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215, or call (614) 728-2958



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# Safety Belt Use During Pregnancy



## SAFETY BELTS AND PREGNANCY



- ✧ There is no evidence that safety belts increase the chance of injury to the fetus, uterus or placenta, no matter how severe the collision.
- ✧ The fetus is protected in a fluid-filled sac in the uterus.
- ✧ The uterus is protected by organs, muscles and bones.
- ✧ Fetal injury due to pressure from the safety belt is rare, occurring in less than 1 out of 10,000 car crashes.

### PROPER USE DURING PREGNANCY

1. Place the lap belt under your abdomen, as low on your hips as possible and across your upper thighs.
2. Position the shoulder belt between the breasts.
3. Adjust your safety belt as snugly as is comfortably possible.
4. If necessary, adjust your seat so your safety belt is worn properly.
5. If slight discomfort is experienced while traveling, consult your doctor for tips on making your trip more pleasant.

### AFTER THE BABY IS BORN

- ✧ Infant-only and convertible child safety seats are designed to protect infants and small children in the event of a car crash and should be used at all times.
- ✧ Your arms provide security for your baby, but not during a car crash. The enormous force of a collision can throw the child from your arms with destructive power.
- ✧ Studies show that proper use of child safety seats decrease the chances of injury by more than 80 percent.
- ✧ As a parent or caregiver, you should continue to wear your safety belt. Act as a positive role model for your children, so they too will grow up with a healthy attitude.