

Safety Fact Sheet

Baby and Child Carriers

What are baby and child carriers?

Carriers are slings, pouches or backpacks in which babies and children may be carried. Carriers may be strapped to an adult's torso and worn on the front, or strapped to the back of an adult, similar to a "back-pack". Carriers allow parents and carers to hold babies and children while having their hands free.

How may children be injured when in baby and child carriers?

- Children may fall out of the carrier while it is being adjusted.
- Babies may slip down through wide leg openings and fall to the ground.
- Children may sustain a fall as a result of the parent or carer tripping over or falling while using a carrier.
- Children may fall to the ground when faulty straps or harnesses break.

How common are these injuries?

While baby carriers can be a big help to parents and carers, they have also been associated with injury to children. When children fall out of a carrier, it is often from a significant height which can cause injury to the baby or child.

Is there a Law or an Australian Standard for baby and child carriers?

There are no laws or Australian Standards relating to carriers (there is a European Standard, EN 13209-2 (2005-11) which specifies the safety requirements and test methods for soft carriers for children i.e. those carriers without a framed support).

Please keep in mind the safety reminders below when choosing a carrier.

Remember:

- Look for carriers which have tags indicating the suitable weight and height for that particular carrier.
- Try the carrier on before purchasing it to make sure it fits firmly and matches your baby's height and weight.
- Ensure there is adequate head support for your baby, especially when they are at an age when they have little head and neck control.
- Ensure your child fits snugly in the carrier, with leg openings that will not allow your child to slip out.
- Use body straps and limb restraints to hold your child in position.
- Ensure there is padding on metal frames, to protect your child's body.
- Take care when putting on and taking off the carrier and when bending over.
- The Children's Hospital at Westmead recommends that you check for products that have been recalled (www.recalls.gov.au) prior to buying or borrowing an item for use with your child.
- For more information on Baby Product Safety, please visit: www.accc.gov

This fact sheet is for educational purposes only.

This document was reviewed on 14th January 2010.

kids health
the children's hospital at Westmead
Child Health Promotion Unit

www.chw.edu.au

© The Children's Hospital at Westmead 2010

