

Automobile restraints do not increase chance of fetal complications following accidents

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It is well established that seat belts save lives. However, many pregnant women do not wear seat belts, for fear that the belt itself could injure the baby in a car crash. But is this actually the case? Does the seat belt put the baby at risk?

A group of researchers led by Dr. Stacie Zelman from Wake Forest University examined a national database of over two million injured patients, and found over 2,400 [pregnant women](#) injured in car crashes. Women wearing a seat belt, having an air bag, or both were significantly less likely to have pregnancy-related complications than women with neither a seat belt nor an air bag. The combination of a seat belt and air bag resulted in the lowest rate of complications.

The researchers conclude that pregnant women should use [seat belts](#) with confidence that they will help, not hurt, in a crash.

More information: The presentation, entitled "Automobile Safety Restraints Do Not Increase The Chance of Fetal Complications Following Motor Vehicle Collision," will be given by Dr. Stacie Zelman in the Injury Prevention forum at the 2009 SAEM Annual Meeting at the Sheraton New Orleans on Saturday, May 16 at 4:30 PM. Abstracts are published in Vol. 16, No. 4, Supplement 1, April 2009 of *Academic Emergency Medicine*, the official journal of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine.

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