

SPINAL IMMOBILIZATION OF A CHILD IN A CAR SEAT

NOTE: This procedure is used for children that do not require a rapid extrication from the car seat. If the car seat is damaged or insufficient to use for immobilization then the child should be removed from the car seat as in the Rapid Extrication from a Child Car Seat.

If the child has already been removed from the car seat prior to your arrival, use an appropriately sized immobilization device.

- Take appropriate body substance isolation precautions.
- Stabilize the child in the car seat
 - A rescuer stabilizes the child's car seat in an upright position while rescuer #1 initiates and maintains manual inline stabilization of the head and neck in the neutral position.
- Assess each extremity for the presence of distal pulse, capillary refill, motor function and sensory function.
- Remove car seat straps and apply collar
 - Rescuer #2 releases or cuts the straps of the car seat. Whenever possible you should avoid cutting the straps unless it is necessary. Apply an appropriately sized cervical collar. If you do not have a collar that will fit the child then you may use a towel roll around the neck.
- Continue to secure the child in the seat
 - Use towels or bath blankets to fill the voids between the child's torso and pelvis and the car seat. If the straps have not been cut and are not damaged replace them into their secured fasteners to secure the child. If you are unable to use the straps then you may use tape to secure the child. After the torso and pelvis are secured you may fill in the voids around the child's head with towels and securely tape the child's head to the seat.
- Assess each extremity for the presence of distal pulse, capillary refill, motor function and sensory function.
- Transporting the child
 - After the child is secured in the car seat, the car seat should be placed on the ambulance stretcher with the head of the stretcher positioned upright at a 90 degree angle. The stretcher straps should be thread through the appropriate areas on the car seat according the manufactures specifications.
 - If you are unable to use the stretcher the car seat may be properly secured, as stated above, on the bench seat.
- During transport continue to check the straps to assure they have not loosened.

NOTE: Do not secure any straps or tape in a manner which may hinder the patient's airway or breathing at any time.