

Bringing Home Baby

The lead up to the arrival of your baby is a busy time as parents prepare their homes, and themselves, for life with a newborn. But in the rush to get ready to meet your new family member it's important to remember that preparing your car is also a top priority when it comes to bringing home baby.

North West Private Maternity Services Manager Kim Pickering said many parents were nervous about their first car trip with their new baby but that steps could be taken to help prepare for the first big drive.

“The car trip home from hospital is the first environment that parents have been away from the support of their midwife and nursing team in hospital and many parents are quite nervous about getting their baby in and out of their capsule,” she said.

“We would suggest having your capsule professionally fitted, especially if you are a first time parent and to do that several weeks before your baby is due.

“That way both parents can get used to the way the capsule works. You can even put a doll in it and practice getting the capsule in and out of the base to check you are comfortable with the position in the car and familiarise yourself with the restraints.”

Kim stressed the importance of having the capsule fitted well before the baby's due date as babies don't always arrive on schedule!

“We have had several cases where a family welcomes their baby into the world early and at discharge time realise they don't have their baby capsule installed in the car,” Kim said.

“At other times we have had parents ask midwives or nurses for assistance installing the capsule on the day of their departure – our staff often go above and beyond for our patients but unfortunately we don't have the expertise or qualification to assist with this.”

Here are North West Maternity's top tips for preparing your car for your new baby:

- Do plenty of research on baby capsules and car restraints and where possible try different models that friends and family have installed in their vehicles
- If you are opting to hire your capsule book one early to ensure it's available in time for your new arrival
- Fit your baby capsule several weeks before your baby is due – just in case they decide they want to meet you early
- Professional fitting of the capsule can give you peace of mind, particularly if you are a first time parent
- If possible have your car serviced and ensure your tyres are in good condition prior to your baby's arrival



- Practice using your baby capsule before the baby arrives to build your confidence
- Consider window shades if your car windows aren't tinted to help protect your baby from the glare and heat of the sun

Useful links:

www.kidsafe.com.au

www.racq.com.au

www.tmr.qld.gov.au (for Queensland child restraint laws)