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Family physicians' approach and knowledge about the use of child car safety seats and seat belts

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Background & Aim: Ttraffic accidents(TA) are at the sixth order among all causes of children deaths. More than 618,000 children rode in vehicles during a 1 year period without the use of a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt at least some of the time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Child safety seats(CSS) reduce the risk of death in passenger cars by 71% for infants, and by 54% for toddlers ages 1 to 4 years. Booster seats reduce the risk for serious injury by 45% for children ages 4 to 8 years. It is essential for the parents to be aware of the importance of car safety seats and seat belt use for their children. The aim of this study was to determine the self practices of family physicians in use of car safety systems for children and their approach to inform their patient population.

Method: In this descriptive cross-sectional study, volunteer family physicians fulfilled a form. Statistical analysis were made by SPSS 20.0.

Results: Sixty family physician participated the study, 55.0% (n:33) were male. 86.7% (n:52) were married. 93.3% (n: 56) had a private car. 75.0% were using seat belt in front seats everytime, 8.0% only for inter city journeys. 48.3% were never using rear seat belts. 60.0% were not using CSS for their children. 87.5% were putting the CSS on right hand side at the rear seat. Only 18.3% knew the mandatory legal age interval to use CSS. 95.0% did not ask their patients' CSS useage and 68.3% did not think they should inform their patients about CSS usage. Only 1.7% felt inadequate, whereas 48.3% wanted to be trained.

Conclusions: TA are an important preventable cause of death and disabilities in children. Family physicians should inform parents about CSS.