

Counterfeit Car Seats, part 1

Hospital staff and car seat technicians have noticed a recent increase in the number of counterfeit car seats being purchased by unknowing parents. We have recently had several of these at TMC.

- This is a major safety concern, as lower-priced knock-offs tempt well-meaning parents but may not protect their children in a crash.
- Counterfeit seats are sold across the web, including on major online retailer websites that allow third-party sellers, such as Amazon, eBay, Walmart or Temu.

Risks of counterfeit car seats

Counterfeit car seats are life-threatening for child passengers since. They do not offer the same protections as car seats that meet federal motor vehicle safety standards (FMVSS). These seats are often made with cheaper material that does not hold up in a crash or are missing key safety features.

To be compliant in the United States, all car seats must include the following:

- A five-point harness with straps that go over the hips and shoulders
- A chest clip
- A splitter plate behind the seat
- Labeling with specific weight and height limits
- Manufacturing label with name, model number, date of manufacture and/or expiration dates
- Registration card and manual

Tips to spotting non-compliant or counterfeit car seats

1. Look for labels

Car seat labels are a good indicator of a legitimate car seat. All legitimate car seats contain a manufacturing label with name, model number, date of manufacture and/or expiration dates, and a warning label with a yellow header that states: "This child restraint system conforms to all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)." The labels will be in both English and Spanish. In addition to missing labels, look for grammatical errors on labels, which are another red flag.

2. Check for missing parts

As stated above, all seats in the United States. must have specific parts to be compliant with federal guidelines. These parts include: A five-point harness with straps that go over the hips and shoulders, a chest clip, and a splitter plate located on the back of the seat. If a car seat is missing one or more of these parts, especially the chest clip, it is a sign that the car seat is non-compliant with U.S. standards or is a counterfeit.

3. Make sure that the manual and registration card are included

Car seats must be sold with a manual and a registration card. Any car seat that is not sold with these required documents is more likely to be non-compliant or illegitimate.

If you determine that you have a counterfeit car seat, **discontinue use immediately**. Have the caregiver contact the retailer to notify them that they sold a counterfeit.

Counterfeit Car Seats, part 2

See images below on what to look for to ensure you have a certified car seat:

