

### **WHAT IS A CHEST HARNESS?**

A chest harness is any strapping that goes over the chest of a person, helping them to sit upright. It may be attached to equipment such as a wheelchair or shower chair.

### **WHY IS THERE A CONCERN ABOUT SAFETY?**

A chest harness can become a choking hazard. Tragic incidents have been known to occur involving a chest harness on a young child.

### **WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MAKE SURE THE HARNESS IS SAFE?**

- At least an **adult hand-width** between top of harness and base of child's neck
- Harness straps and seatbelts should be fitted with secure **buckles/triglides**.
- Regularly check your harness, seatbelt straps and buckles for signs of wear.
- Make sure the child is sitting well back in the seat before the seat belt and harness are done up firmly
- Never wear a chest harness by itself. ALWAYS wear a firm, secure seatbelt, and put on the seatbelt FIRST
- Changes in fit may occur with growth spurts, weight changes or different clothing.
- Any concerns about the fit of the harness should be discussed with a therapist.



### **MAKING SURE EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT HARNESS SAFETY**

It is the **primary carer's** responsibility to inform other family members or carers about harness safety. This information can be downloaded from the [Factsheets page on the Novita website](#).

### **ENSURING SAFETY WHEN TRAVELING ON A BUS IN A WHEELCHAIR**

A chest harness is not an adequate safety restraint for travel. Vehicle safety restraints must always be used.

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Please contact your Novita Physiotherapist or service site.

*Disclaimer: This information is of a general nature only and does not constitute advice. Novita Children's Services makes no representations as to the accuracy, usefulness, suitability or application of the information to a child's particular circumstances. You should seek professional advice before acting or relying on the information.*