

Babywearing

You may have noticed a mom in your area walking around the grocery store or at the park with a child strapped to them in a carrier. This is what is known as “babywearing” and has become really popular in America in recent years. It is simply when you keep your child closely held to you while doing daily activities. There are different types of baby carriers you can use depending on the size of your child.

There are local babywearing groups across America. You can find “Bluegrass Babywearers” on Facebook for the Lexington group of babywearing moms and the Babywearing International of Greater Cincinnati Chapter on Facebook as well as online at babywearinginternational.org. Here you can connect with other mom and learn tips and tricks and “rent out” baby carriers to test before purchasing them. They can get pretty expensive so it’s smart to try them first if you can.

Benefits

- Babywearing helps your baby develop by the sense of touch that is so important to your baby’s development.
 - It’s extremely convenient.
- It makes breastfeeding in public easy, especially if you’re a more modest woman. Most carriers come with a hood or piece of fabric that you can use to cover yourself.
 - Some are very budget-friendly and well worth the money.

Visit <http://babywearinginternational.org/what-is-babywearing/babywearing-resources/benefits-of-babywearing-2/> for more extensive information on the benefits of babywearing.



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Choosing Your Carrier

There are different types of carriers for all different people and babies. Some are for the more advanced babywearers and take a lot of practice and some are very simple that allow for easy in and out for the child.

1. Wrap- This is simply a long piece of fabric that you will notice comes in sizes depending on how long you want the fabric to be. The average size is a size 4. This carrier is for the advanced babywearers and can be wrapped in an assortment of different ways. It can also be used for front and back carriers, but they can be quite expensive. I suggest speaking to an advanced babywearer or babywearing educator who uses wraps regularly before trying to use a wrap.
2. Ring Sling- Many moms like ring slings because like the wrap they allow for a snug and supportive carry, but there is no tying or wrapping involved. Instead you place the fabric over one shoulder and place the baby in and pull on the fabric to tighten in around the baby. It may take a little practice, but not nearly as much as it may with the wrap. These are meant for only hip and front carries.
3. Mei Tai- (Pronounce "may tie") This carrier requires very little learning. It has a panel of fabric with 4 straps attached (2 at the top, 2 at the bottom). The bottom straps tie around your waist and the top straps go over the shoulders. These can be used for front and back carries.
4. SSC- (Soft Structured Carrier) These are the most common carriers because they are possibly the easiest to use. It is a lot like the mei tai, but there is no tying or wrapping, but buckles that you adjust to fit you comfortably. They are very easy and allow front and back carries (some offer side carries).

Please follow the instructions of the manufacturer that come along with the carrier and use common sense when babywearing. Avoid extreme sports and activities.



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