

appropriate car seats for infants.

Community Focus

Preterm and Near-Term Infant Car Seat Evaluation

The American Academy of Pediatrics ([Bull, Engle, and Committee on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention and the Committee on Fetus and Newborn, et al, 2009](#)) recommends that infants born before 37 weeks of gestation be evaluated for apnea, bradycardia, and oxygen desaturation episodes before hospital discharge.* The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that facilities develop policies for the implementation of a program of evaluation; however, few evidence-based practice recommendations have been published to date delineating specific requirements for such a program. Based on the available literature, suggestions for providing a car seat evaluation of infants born before 37 weeks of gestation include:

- Use the parents' car seat for the evaluation.
- Perform the evaluation 1 to 7 days before the infant's anticipated discharge.
- Secure the infant in the car seat per guidelines using blanket rolls on the side.
- Set the pulse oximeter low alarm at 88% (or per unit protocol).
- Set the heart rate low alarm limit at 80 beats/min and apnea alarm at 20 seconds (cardiorespiratory monitor).
- Leave the infant undisturbed semiupright in the car seat for a minimum of 90 to 120 minutes or for the time period parents state it takes (whichever is longer) to arrive at their home.
- Document the infant's tolerance to the car seat evaluation.
- An episode of desaturation, bradycardia, or apnea (20 seconds or more) constitutes a failure, and evaluation by the practitioner