When the correct size is not available, use an oversized cuff rather than an undersized one or use another site that more appropriately fits the cuff size. Do not choose a cuff based on the name of the cuff (e.g., an "infant" cuff may be too small for some infants).

Nursing Alert

Compare blood pressure (BP) in the upper and lower extremities to detect abnormalities, such as coarctation of the aorta, in which the lower extremity pressure is less than the upper extremity pressure.

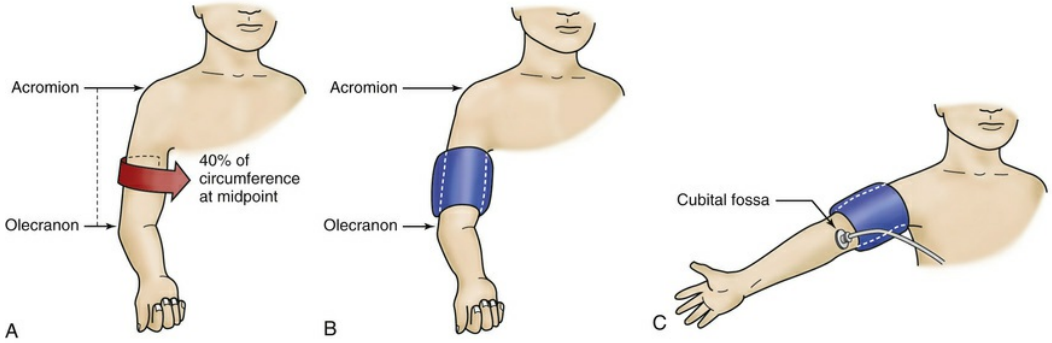

FIG 4-12 Determination of proper cuff size. **A,** Cuff bladder width should be approximately 40% of circumference of arm measured at a point midway between olecranon and acromion. **B,** Cuff bladder length should cover 80% to 100% of arm circumference. **C,** Blood pressure (BP) should be measured with the cubital fossa at the heart level. The arm should be supported. The stethoscope bell is placed over the brachial artery pulse proximal and medial to the cubital fossa and below the bottom edge of the cuff. (From National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute: Update on the Task Force Report [1987] on high blood pressure in children and adolescents: a working group report from the National High Blood Pressure Education Program, NIH Pub No 96-3790, Bethesda, MD, 1996, Author.)

TABLE 4-5

Recommended Dimensions for Blood Pressure Cuff Bladders

Age	Width (cm)	Length (cm)	Maximum Arm Circumference (cm)*
Newborn	4	8	10