

Apply the Evidence: Nursing Implications

Based on the evidence in the literature, the recommendation is to continue administering IM injections in the anterolateral aspect of the thigh in the majority of infants. The deltoid can be used in toddlers if the muscle mass is adequate but the anterolateral aspect of the thigh is still preferred. The deltoid is preferred for children 3 to 18 years old.

Needle length is an important factor in decreasing local reactions; the length should be adequate to deposit the medication into the muscle for IM injections. Recommendations are for a 22- to 25-mm ($\frac{7}{8}$ - to 1-inch) needle in infants. For toddlers and most older children (3 to 18 years old) the needle should be at least 1 inch long ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011](#)). Preterm and small emaciated infants may require a shorter needle based on weight and muscle mass size.

References

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