

This order set and care plan are intended to assist in the implementation of evidence-based practices for the initial hospitalization of infants born late preterm (between 34 0/7 weeks and 36 6/7 weeks gestation). Both the order set and care plan were developed in parallel to ensure that they present a consistent model for late preterm infant care. Care providers are directed to the references for additional resources related to the care of late-preterm infants.

**Background:** Over 8% of all infants born in the US are born late preterm. Late preterm infants are more likely than term infants to experience:

- Intensive and/or prolonged hospitalization, leading to higher health care costs
- Death within the first year of life

Late preterm birth is associated with several maternal and fetal risk factors:

Maternal Risk Factors	Fetal Risk Factors
History of preterm labor	Intrauterine growth restriction
Under 18 years or over 35 years age	Anomalies
Multiple fetuses	Infection
Imprecise dating	Imprecise fetal well-being testing
Elective inductions	Imprecise fetal lung maturity testing
Maternal health conditions (e.g., obesity, hypertension, diabetes, infection)	

Late preterm infants may appear to be mature or nearly mature, but they are at **higher risk than term infants** for:

- Thermoregulatory problems
- Respiratory distress
- Apnea
- Feeding difficulties
- Hyperbilirubinemia
- Sepsis/infection
- Neurodevelopmental problems

This order set and care plan focus on these, and other needs, of the late preterm infant.

**How to use these documents:** There are insufficient data to prescribe specific courses for care of late preterm infants. This order set and care plan are intended to serve as implementation guides for the care of late preterm infants. Facilities should adapt them as needed in consultation with their regional medical centers. Practitioners should be aware of changes in recommendations as more data become available. A **Reference List** for the orders and care plan is available. Other guidelines are listed in the references and on page seven of the care plan.

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