

# Moderate-to-late preemies likely go home at 36 weeks

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Moderate-to-late preterm babies (born at a gestational age of 32 to 36

weeks) with no significant medical problems on admission are likely to be discharged at 36 weeks of postmenstrual age, according to a study recently published in the *American Journal of Perinatology*.

Alanna Higgins Joyce, M.D., M.P.H., of the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, and colleagues retrospectively conducted an electronic chart review on 12,498 infants admitted to a [neonatal intensive care unit](#) (NICU) from 2009 through 2015 to identify 3,240 moderate-to-late [preterm infants](#) (32 0/7 and 36 6/7 weeks of gestation).

The researchers found that the mean postmenstrual age at discharge was 36 3/7 weeks. Significantly longer length of stay (LOS) was seen for infants who were small for gestational age. Significantly longer LOS was also seen for infants born between 34 and 36 6/7 weeks if they had [respiratory distress syndrome](#). Additionally, longer LOS was seen for infants with admission diagnoses of neonatal abstinence syndrome, meconium aspiration syndrome, hydrops, hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy, biliary emesis, ABO incompatibly, or a genetic diagnosis.

"Clinicians, hospitals, and families all desire and deserve the most reliable estimates of discharge timing for all NICU infants," the authors write. "Our results indicate that for moderate-to-late preterm infants in the NICU with no other significant medical problems at admission, families can reasonably be counseled that discharge can be expected at 36 weeks of postmenstrual age."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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