

Apnea Monitor Frequently Asked Questions



The Monitor

What is the length of time a baby is generally on a monitor after they go home? (How long will my baby be on a monitor?)

Usually, babies are on a home monitor for about one to two months. If your baby is also on caffeine or oxygen, then the length of monitoring might be a bit longer.

I was sent home with two monitors because we live so far away. Can I use one monitor upstairs and the other downstairs in my home?

We recommend using only one monitor. Using both monitors at the same time will be confusing when we download the memory unit. Use the second monitor only as backup. By using only one monitor we can

have consistent, consecutive data in one place that will assist your provider in planning your baby's care.

Are the alarm limits always kept the same on my baby's monitor?

Alarm limits change with the age of the baby. Resting heart rates will decrease, as your baby gets older. We adjust the alarms when we download the monitor by using the phone modem.

What should I do if I drop the monitor?

If you drop your baby's monitor call your monitor company (the number is on top of the monitor) as soon as possible. They need to make sure the monitor is working properly.

What does download mean?

Download or downloading is the process of retrieving the stored monitor information from the monitor's memory unit. The downloads are arranged with you by program staff from the hospital. The downloads are done over the phone.

What do you see when you print out the download? (How do you know if an alarm is real?)

There is a lot of information that is retrieved from the monitor when downloaded. The frequency of monitor use, loose leads, and alarm waveforms (true and false) are automatically recorded in the apnea monitor. We download this information via telephone and then analyze the data to determine when your baby's monitor may be safely discontinued

Travel

Are there any guidelines for traveling with the monitor?

No "true" guidelines exist for traveling with the home monitor, but we do have a few suggestions.

- Make sure your baby's monitor is fully charged when you travel. Monitors generally are fully charged after five hours and will last about 20 hours on battery power.

- Always check with your apnea program or provider first before traveling out of the immediate area with your baby.
- It's important to make sure the baby is ready to travel.
- If traveling by air, check with your airlines to see if there are special provisions for checking in with the monitor and security.
- Avoid leaving the monitor in temperature extremes when disconnected from the baby (a very hot or cold car might alter the battery capability of the monitor).
- Make sure you have an ample supply of patches or a replacement belt.
- Call your equipment company to let them know you are traveling. The company might give you an extra back up monitor to take along for trips that are out of the area or another contact name should you need replacement supplies while out of the area.
- If traveling is necessary for an extended time, request a health history on your baby from your provider to carry with you should you need to be seen by another provider not in your clinic.

Equipment

Where do I get more supplies for the monitor?

If any monitor supplies are needed please contact your equipment company. The company's number is listed on top of the monitor. The company will be happy to provide you with additional patches, lead wires, or belts as needed.

My baby's skin is getting red, is there anything I can do?

Inspection of your baby's skin should be done regularly when using the patches or belt. Your baby's skin can be sensitive. Changing the patches regularly and moving them just slightly can help protect your baby's skin. Alternating the use of the patches and belt can also help to minimize irritation to the baby's skin.

Let your monitor equipment company know if your baby is sensitive to his/her patches. The monitor company has many types of leads that can be used if those sent home with the baby are causing irritation to the skin. Avoid using lotions or oils on the baby's skin beneath patches or the belt. The use of lotions can disrupt the monitoring conduction causing false monitor alarms. Always be sure that the belt patches are clean and that the lead patches are sticky when using them.

Twins

Can I co-bed my twins when they are on a monitor? (Does it matter which monitor they are on?)

Co-bedding of twins is not recommended while your baby is on an apnea monitor. Because of the way the monitor works, detecting chest movement for breathing, the monitor could pick up the movement of your other baby (twin) and give a false reading or misinterpret one child's chest movement over the other.

Why did one of my twins go home with a monitor and the other didn't?

Criteria for going home with an apnea monitor are very specific. A baby needs to meet specific criteria before a monitor is medically necessary. It's not uncommon for one of the multiples to go home with a monitor and the other without.

Reflux

What is reflux? (How is reflux treated?)

Children's Hospitals and Clinics has parent education materials on reflux and many other topics on this Web site. (See [Reflux](#) and [Patient/Family Education Materials](#))

Care of your baby

Can anyone take care of my baby?

Assessing the comfort level of those caring for your baby is especially important when deciding who will be caring for your baby. If your baby is on a monitor, has spells or needs special care when feeding you will want to be sure that whoever will be caring for your baby in your absence has proper training. The home monitor program provides CPR and monitor response training for extended family and care providers that might be caring for your baby at no extra cost while your baby is in the program. If additional training is indicated for another care provider please contact us.

Will I need to do CPR?

CPR is recommended and ordered by your baby's doctor before your baby is discharged from the hospital. CPR class is available for your family and extended family if your baby goes home on a monitor.