

AAP: Updated guidelines on newborn hospital release

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(HealthDay)—The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has just released updated guidelines for judging whether or not a newborn is ready for hospital discharge. The guidelines are published online April 27 in *Pediatrics*.

There can be wide variation in the degree of an infant's readiness to leave the hospital, and a number of factors need to be considered, according to the AAP. The new guidelines outline specific criteria for determining whether a mother is ready to care for herself and her baby at home, including the mother's health, the level of support she has at home, the health and stability of the baby, and access to follow-up care.

Other criteria include the infant completing at least two successful

feedings (either by bottle or breast) and parents having an appropriate car safety seat, as well as the proper training for how to use it. It's also important to assess possible risk factors in the home, including whether parents have mental illness, untreated drug or alcohol use, a history of child abuse or neglect, or a history of domestic violence, according to the AAP.

"The timing of discharge from the [hospital](#) should be the decision of the [health](#) care provider caring for the mother and her newborn," the authors of the [guidelines](#) write. "This decision should be made in consultation with the family and should not be based on arbitrary policies established by third-party payers."

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