
### Brief Summary
This study measures the occurrence and duration of specific alarms (HR, SpO2, and Resp Rate only) in a NICU and their relationship to the response of the nurses in the unit. Although this was a 22 bed unit, the study focused on a 6 patient care area where the most acute infants are treated.

This study found that the high number of alarms prevents a nurse from responding to all alarms. Instead, alarms functioned more as an indicator about the patient's status that the nurse integrated with other information to adjust their sequencing of care activities. However, in the cases where an alarm lasted longer (for more than 5 seconds) or was a rarer occurring alarm (in this study that was the respiratory alarm in comparison to the SpO2) there was a tendency for the nurse to intervene more quickly. The authors also questioned whether nurses learn to respond to alarm pattern variations between patients rather than just to an alarm.

The authors concluded alarm systems must reduce the number of alarms, while assisting in sequencing of activities, noting “If alarms serve as meaningful information sources, they may have value for operators, even if they do not directly elicit responses.”

### Technologies Involved
- Patient monitor

### Care Settings
- Inpatient, Critical Care: NICU

### Clarion Theme (s)
- Improve alarm system management