



(7 to 7.45 a.m. OR 5 to 5.45 p.m.)

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Have you tried 'digital detox'?

Recently, I joined a quiet book reading club and went for one of their meetings. I took along a book I had been meaning to read for a while (but never got round to), picked a spot and started reading. Interestingly, a part of the book was on the strong need for the occasional 'digital detox' in our lives.

The space was quiet and calm. Around me were several others who were part of the quiet reading initiative — all glued to their books. I managed to cover several pages at a steady pace. It was a completely different experience to put away my phone, and not have images or videos constantly flashing before my eyes.

Digital detox — or carving out a chunk of time when we do not use our phones, computers, iPads, smart watches, or any other devices — is not a new phenomenon, but it is definitely one that needs to be given priority. I understand how important our phones and gadgets are in terms of running our work and home lives, but I am also keenly aware of how easy it is to get hooked onto them. A few seconds of causal browsing can turn into scrolling for hours together without even realising where the time has gone!

Digital addiction affects not just us but our children as well — and given how children learn from every little thing we say or do, it is high time we take mindful steps to break free of the sway that digital devices have over us.



The upcoming summer vacation is the perfect opportunity to look into activities you can do together as a family — and no, sitting in the same room and browsing on your respective phones doesn't count! Plan a little local 'getaway' and explore some unknown part of your city. Visit a library and rediscover the joy of reading. Enjoy meals together, from planning to preparing to indulging. Pick up a new hobby or learn a new language.

And when summer vacation is over, come and tell me what you did! I am eager to know about your creative ways of having fun while putting the lid on digital devices.

Happy holidays! •

Dr. Kavitha Gautham

Managing Director, BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

Health Shots turns 1!

We brought out 12 issues in the last year, and are entering the next annual cycle in our publishing calendar. It is more than a milestone — it is a testament to the power of authentic, genuine content, and to your unwavering support. We are truly grateful that our content has been so well received by people across different age groups, and we will continue to give our best.

We want to hear from you! Please keep sending your feedback, suggestions and questions to info@bloomhealthcare.in.

Contents

Paediatrics & Neonatology
Summer Checklist

Reproductive Medicine & Fertility

The Initial

Approach to Male (In)Fertility – Part 2

Your Voice
Prescription for a Better
Relationship with Your Doctor - Part 2

Obstetrics & GynaecologyA Father-to-be's Guide Through Pregnancy

General Medicine
It's Heating Up!

Better Living
Glow from Within!

Health Insurance Watch the Clock!

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SUMMER List

With temperatures soaring higher every day, it might seem that keeping your child cool, comfortable and healthy is a hard task. Don't worry – just follow and tick off the points shared below and you will be all set for an enjoyable summer!

the annual vacation coming up, you are probably busy planning activities to keep your children occupied. More importantly, you are probably wondering how to keep your spirits high through the raging summer heat! Here are some important tips to keep in mind to cover your child's health and well-being — and give you peace of mind.

USE SUNSCREEN: If your child is over 3 years of age, get them a child-friendly sunscreen and use it as needed when they are out in the sun. A child's skin is tender and can suffer sunburns easily if not protected. If you are doubtful about which brand to use or how often, check with your paediatrician on safe ingredients and usage.

STEP OUT AFTER THE SUN GOES DOWN: While it is prudent to keep your child indoors during the mornings and afternoons, encourage them to step out and engage in play or physical activity in the evenings. It helps them get a much-needed dose of exercise and fresh air.

DON'T USE PRICKLY HEAT POWDER: Using prickly heat powder is seen as a way to beat the sweaty feeling, but the powder may clog sweat pores and cause inflammation of the sweat ducts (especially when used on children under the age of 12). To keep your child cool and comfortable, dress them in cotton clothes and encourage them to bathe twice a day in lukewarm (not hot) water. Avoid putting home remedies or body cream on skin rashes as this may aggravate the problem.

HYDRATION IS A PRIORITY: Encourage your child to drink plenty of water and fresh coconut water. Restrict the intake of sweet beverages and packed fruit juice, and give them cut fruits instead. Include water-rich vegetables like cucumbers, tomatoes and white pumpkin in daily meals.

KEEP A WATCH ON JUNK FOOD INTAKE: While avoiding junk food may not be feasible, parents should keep a watch on what



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their children are eating and drinking. Talk to your child about how they can balance their intake of comfort foods and nutritious meals, and help them to create a plan they can comfortably follow. More importantly, lead them by example!

CHECK YOUR CHILD'S VACCINATION SCHEDULE: If you are planning to travel, check with your paediatrician as to which vaccines are due immediately and also as per the country/region you are travelling to. This is also a good time to catch up on missed vaccinations, so do check in with your paediatrician without delay.

LOOK OUT FOR 3 WARNING SIGNS: Skin rashes, urinary irritation and constipation — these are the top three warning signs that you should look out for in your child. They could be an indication of dehydration, and need to be addressed immediately. Consult your paediatrician as soon as you notice any of these signs, and use medication only on their advice.



(Part 2)

The Initial Approach to Male (in)fertility

While infertility in general is a highly sensitive health aspect, male infertility presents its own set of challenges, particularly in terms of laying out exactly what is the exact root cause of the condition. In this article, we continue our discussion by focussing on semen analysis and how it is used in evaluating fertility profiles in men.



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semen analysis is the single most important test offered to a male partner to evaluate his fertility profile. It is also one of the primary investigations offered to a couple having difficulty conceiving because more often than not, the status of the semen parameters dictates the future treatment plan on most occasions. Male factor infertility accounts for 40% of the cases in a fertility clinic. So, the clinical utility and proper execution of a semen analysis is paramount to identify and address male infertility.

THE SEMEN PARAMETERS

A routine semen analysis involves the preliminary assessment of the physical properties of the semen sample like colour, odour and viscosity. When a semen sample is collected afresh, it usually appears greyish and semi-solid (coagulum) in consistency. With time, it becomes liquefied under the influence of enzymes from the prostate gland. Any deviations in liquefaction can produce a highly viscous sample which can interfere with the movement of the sperms. The volume of the semen sample is also assessed. A volume upwards of 1.5ml is considered healthy. Nonetheless, the three main parameters that are focussed upon to assess and guide treatment include the following aspects.

Sperm concentration indicates the number of sperm cells per ml of sample. A normal semen sample should contain at least 15 million sperm/mL of semen (WHO 2010 reference guide) below which the sample is labelled as 'oligozoospermia'. If the sperm count is low, it may indicate reduced fertility but at the same time, a normal count does not guarantee fertility either.

It is important to note that an abnormal semen analysis report does not necessarily mean an individual is infertile. Semen samples do exhibit natural variation over time and therefore a single abnormal semen analysis should never be the yardstick to suggest treatment straight away.

Sperm motility indicates the ability of sperm to swim towards the egg for fertilisation. Sperm motility can be progressive or non-progressive. Progressive motility (PM) is where the sperm are actively swimming and gaining distance as they move. However, when they are not travelling forward as they move, they get labelled under non-progressive motility (NPM). Immotile sperm do not swim and they can be either viable or dead. For total motility (PM+NPM), a value of 40% or greater is considered normal. At least 32% of the sperm should be progressively motile. Sperm motility can be influenced by duration of abstinence, spillage of sample during collection, increasing age, infection, heat, medications and environmental toxins. Low motility is usually addressed in a report as 'asthenozoospermia'.

Sperm morphology indicates the percentage of normally shaped sperm spanning the head, mid-piece (body) and/or the tail. At least 4% of the sperm should have a normal shape. Deviation in any one or multiple sites can delay pregnancy and is reported using the term 'teratozoospermia'.

PREPARING FOR A SEMEN ANALYSIS

Ahead of producing a sample for semen analysis, it is important to abstain from ejaculation for a period of two to five days. A shorter or longer period has a potential to affect the results. The collection is usually preferred in a hospital setting to reduce temperature fluctuations during transit of sample. In certain cases, however, home collection is cleared by the laboratory after signing an informed consent and information on a secure transport. The male partner will be asked to produce a semen sample into a non-toxic, sterile plastic container provided by the laboratory. The container will have the name and unique identifier number of the patient clearly labelled on it.

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

It is important to note that an abnormal semen analysis report does not necessarily mean an individual is infertile. It only indicates a reduced probability to conceive compared to those with normal reports. Semen samples do exhibit natural variation over time and therefore a single abnormal semen analysis should never be the yardstick to suggest treatment straight away. In such cases, repeating a semen analysis after at least four weeks can help understand the persistence of the abnormality. Also, a well-equipped laboratory and availability of adequately trained laboratory personnel is a prerequisite for ensuring a standardised semen analysis report that can be used to guide the level of treatment in couples.



Male infertility is further understood and evaluated by more than just sperm tests. We will look into more aspects in the upcoming issue.



(Part 2)

Prescription for a **Better Relationship**

with Your **Doctor**

A little guide on how to approach your doctor to ensure a mutually beneficial and rewarding exchange.

Anita Krishnaswamy

CEO, BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

What are some things we can do as patients to forge a strong relationship with the doctor?

(Response continued from previous issue – to read the previous part, please visit https://bloomlifehospital.com/health-shots/ or scan this QR code)



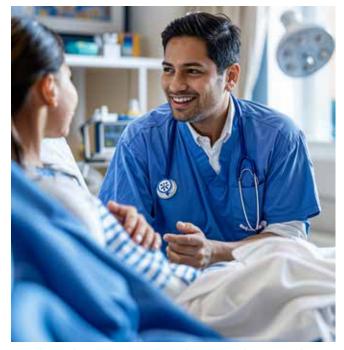
n the last issue, I touched on how a firm relationship between a doctor and patient is built on open, transparent sharing on the patient's part (when it comes to their health-related information).

The other important aspect is faith. As a patient, you can build a strong relationship with your doctor only if you have 100% faith in the physician.

It starts with trusting that your choice of the physician is sound.

When it comes to our health, we are concerned that there be no room for error. This, however, also means that we may feel this faith dipping when there is any hint of information that our decision may not be the best, particularly in the early stages of treatment. If this slide in faith is not addressed, it might lead the patient to not following through fully or properly on the doctor's given treatment guidelines — and thereby create a self-fulfilling cycle of lack of proper treatment.

An example of how this manifests is seen when a doctor asks a person to repeat a test and share the results. If the patient takes it to mean that the doctor is not as much of an expert after all, they may not be convinced and hence not follow through. This, in turn, interrupts the course of treatment.



In this particular example, it is important for the patient to understand that our body is changing (literally) every nanosecond. Hence, a test that was done a few days back may not be relevant anymore, and the doctor might need more updated data to work with. Or, there may be an emerging diagnosis that can be supported only with information gained at specific intervals.

At every step, whether it is a test, course of medicine or a procedure, request your doctor to clarify the reason as to why they are suggesting it. Doctors are ready to answer questions and accommodate requests for more information — they will be able to put your doubts to rest, and you will gain clarity about the course of action suggested and do it with full conviction. If the doctor seems to be rushing to get somewhere else, request them for a time when you can reach out to them (over phone or other means).

A small note that I would add here is to keep a mental filter when it comes to opinions from people around you, information shared via WhatsApp chat or other media, and keep an open mind when speaking with your doctor.

At every step, when your faith remains strong, your treating doctor will be able to work with you easily, and move towards effective treatment and recovery.

A Father-to-be's

Guide Through Pregnancy

As the primary supporters and caregivers during a pregnancy, fathers-to-be play an extremely important role during pregnancy. Here is a little guide on some simple ways in which expecting fathers can help to keep the pregnancy a safe and healthy one.



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Thtil the recent past, when we lived in large joint families, the woman was largely looked after by her mother, mother-in-law and other female relatives. With families now becoming smaller and living as nuclear households, the responsibility of helping the woman to maintain her health and well-being through the pregnancy and delivery falls on the husband. In line with these changes, more and more fathers-to-be are readying themselves in every way possible to play their role in the journey of parenthood — and to play it well. If you are a father-to-be or in the process of planning for a family, here is a simple guide to how you can both have a healthy and happy pregnancy journey.

Eat together: Sharing a meal is one of the best ways to make your bond stronger. Make an effort to dine together in the evenings and on weekends. More importantly, make it a point to opt for healthy choices at each meal.

Join an ante-natal preparation course: Physical and mental preparation for delivery and post-partum recovery is essential for both partners. Joining and attending these classes together will help you understand that exercises your wife is expected to do, and encourage her to follow the routine at home. You will also learn about post-partum recovery and breastfeeding techniques at these classes, which will come in handy in the post-delivery period.

Avoid smoking: Inhalation of second-hand smoke ('passive smoking') can increase the risk of foetal growth issues, lead to a higher risk of low birth weight for the baby, and even cause pre-term birth. The best way to avoid all this is to keep your home completely smoke-free. Also, this is the best time to work on setting a good example for your child – the best motivation to quit smoking.

Exercise regularly: A regular exercise routine can help you remain fit and maintain optimal energy levels. This is essential when preparing to support your partner through the delivery, and when adapting to a new routine with a newborn.

Maintain a good sleep routine: During pregnancy, good quality sleep is essential for mothers-to-be not just for their own good health but also for the baby's health and development. As the ones who are handling much of the responsibility of the pregnancy, you also require sufficient, good sleep for your health and well-being.

Open up for support: It is perfectly normal to feel overwhelmed, anxious or worried about the pregnancy and delivery. Never hesitate to ask for help when you need it. In particular, emotional support is critical. If you are unable to find a family member or friend whom you can confide in, reach out for professional support.



HEATING -

And bringing on some serious health issues! As summer descends on us in full force, let us take note of some extreme issues and be prepared well in advance.

s temperatures soar during the summer months, heat-related illnesses and skin issues become more prevalent. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke, along with skin conditions like prickly heat, are common during this season. Additionally, viral infections such as chickenpox and herpes zoster also see an uptick in summer. Understanding these heat-related concerns, who is at risk, and how to manage or prevent them is essential for maintaining health during the scorching heat.

What are some heat-related conditions we should be

The primary conditions that manifest due to exposure to severe heat include heat exhaustion, heat stroke and skin conditions such as prickly heat or heat rashes. These conditions occur primarily when the body is unable to cool itself properly during prolonged exposure to high temperatures.

Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses excessive amounts of water and salt, typically from sweating. Symptoms include a spike in body temperature (going up to a range between 101°F and 104°F), heavy sweating, weakness, pale skin, fatigue, nausea, headaches, muscle aches and cramps, bodily weakness, dizziness and fainting.

Heat stroke is a much more severe condition that occurs when the body temperature rises above 104°F. Symptoms include hot and flushed or red skin, nausea and vomiting, severe headaches, dizziness, onset of confusion, rapid heart rate, shortness of breath, extreme sweating, confusion or deliriousness, loss of consciousness and seizures. If unattended, a heat stroke could prove fatal, and hence requires immediate medical attention when the symptoms manifest.



People with chronic health conditions like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, or respiratory problems, who may find it hard to handle heat stress



Heat can also lead to **various skin issues**, with prickly heat (also known as heat rash) being the most common. Prickly heat occurs when sweat gets trapped in the sweat glands – which results in a rash, usually on areas where the skin rubs together or where sweat accumulates, such as the neck, underarms, and back.

Who is at risk of developing heat-related conditions?

- Elderly Individuals, particularly those with underlying health conditions, as they have a reduced ability to regulate body temperature
- Children and infants whose bodies are less efficient at managing heat, especially during outdoor play
- People with chronic health conditions like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, or respiratory problems, who may find it hard to handle heat stress
- Athletes and outdoor workers (including those who travel outside for work), who bear the risk of prolonged exposure to high temperatures and exertion.

How can we limit the risk of heat-related illnesses?

- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water.
- Wear loose, breathable clothing, preferably made from cotton.
 Avoid synthetics or tight-fitting clothes
- Avoid being outside and in direct sunlight, especially during the hottest parts of the day. Stay in shaded or air-conditioned areas, especially during the day.
- If you are working outside, take breaks and rest frequently in cool, shaded areas.
- Gently pat the skin dry if you are sweating. Avoid using oily lotions or heavy powders that can block sweat glands.
- If you are having a prickly heat breakout, apply a cool compress
 to the affected area for relief from itching and irritation, or
 use calamine lotion to soothe the irritated skin. In severe
 cases, if the rash does not clear up, or if blisters develop, seek
 medical attention without delay.
- If you notice symptoms of heat exhaustion (such as heavy sweating, dizziness, and nausea), seek cool conditions, hydrate, and rest. If the symptoms seem to get worse, or if you start to experience a high body temperature, confusion, or seeming loss of consciousness, seek immediate medical attention.



Why is Chickenpox More Common During Summer?

Chickenpox (varicella) is a viral infection that is closely linked to the varicella-zoster virus. The condition tends to be more prevalent during summer due to a few key reasons, including increased exposure and contact (think crowded places during vacation time), and weakened immune response in older people in the wake of higher heat and humidity.

Vaccination is the most effective ways to prevent chickenpox. Most people may have been vaccinated against chickenpox during their childhood, but if this is not so, it is best to get vaccinated to reduce the risk of developing the condition. Furthermore, follow preventive measures like practicing good hygiene, and avoiding close contact in public places (especially public swimming pools) to reduce the risk of contracting the disease.



How long does it take for a heat stroke to set in?

There is no specific timeline that we can look at - as in, how long one can stay out in the sun, before the risk of a heat stroke escalates. Also, there is no set pattern in terms of first experiencing heat exhaustion first before a heat stroke sets in. So, if you notice any signs of heat-related illness, don't wait - reach out to your doctor immediately for medical assistance. Delay can be dangerous!

Glowfrom Shweta R. Clinical Dietitian BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

This summer, transform your beauty routine by focusing on what you put on your plate. By embracing a colourful array of fruits and vegetables, staying hydrated, prioritising plant proteins, choosing low glycemic carbohydrates, and supporting your gut health, you lay the groundwork for naturally glowing skin and strong, healthy hair.

chieving vibrant skin and luscious hair isn't just about the creams you apply or the salon visits that you schedule. True radiance starts from within. When you combine a nutrient-dense diet with smart lifestyle choices, your skin and hair naturally glow, even under the relentless summer sun. Our skin and hair are built on the foundation of proper nutrition. They rely on a steady supply of vitamins, antioxidants, and healthy fats to repair and rejuvenate themselves. By feeding your body with the right foods, you support its natural ability to heal, protect, and shine.

Plate Up a Rainbow

A colourful plate is your best defense against premature ageing and environmental damage. Fruits and vegetables are loaded with antioxidants such as vitamins A, C, and E, and minerals like zinc, which protect your skin from UV exposure and oxidative stress. Incorporate a vibrant mix of produce like:

Bell Peppers and Citrus Fruits: Rich in Vitamin C to boost collagen production.

Dark Leafy Greens: Packed with essential nutrients for skin elasticity.

Grapes, Mangoes, and Pomegranate: Natural sources of antioxidants.

Enjoy these as salads or try a refreshing sweet lime fruit salad to kickstart your day with a burst of color and nourishment.

Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate

Water is fundamental for maintaining your skin's moisture and resilience. In summer, when dehydration can lead to dry, flaky skin and brittle hair, ensuring proper hydration is key. Aim to drink at least rwo litres of water daily — as water itself, herbal teas, or water-rich fruits and vegetables like cucumbers, pumpkin and watermelon.

Adding omega-3 rich foods such as fatty fish, chia seeds, or walnuts to your diet can also improve your skin's barrier function, helping it hold onto moisture and combat inflammation. These nutrients are especially beneficial for those who are facing skin conditions like eczema or acne.



Pick Protein First

As you age, your natural collagen production declines, which could lead to wrinkles and a less resilient complexion. Protein plays a crucial role in tissue repair and regeneration, providing the building blocks for structures like collagen, elastin, and keratin, which are essential for maintaining skin elasticity and hair strength. Instead of focusing on a single protein source, aim for a balanced intake by incorporating a variety of options. Lean meats and poultry offer high-quality protein that is vital for collagen synthesis, while eggs are not only rich in protein but also packed with biotin, which supports strong, healthy hair. Additionally, legumes such as beans and lentils provide plantbased proteins that contribute to skin repair. Together, these diverse sources ensure that your body receives all the necessary amino acids for optimal skin and hair health.

Choose Slow-Digesting Carbohydrates

Not all carbohydrates are created equal. High glycemic foods like refined sugars and processed grains can cause rapid spikes in blood sugar, triggering inflammation and excessive sebum production, which may lead to acne. Slow-digesting carbohydrates found in whole grains, fruits, and vegetables offer a steady energy release that helps keep insulin levels stable. This stability not only benefits your skin by protecting collagen but also reduces the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs) or compounds that contribute to skin ageing and inflammation.

Cultivate a Healthy, Happy Gut

Emerging research highlights the critical link between gut health and skin condition. A balanced gut microbiome, enriched with beneficial bacteria, can reduce inflammation and improve overall skin health. To nurture your gut:

Prebiotics: Feed the good bacteria with fibre-rich foods such as whole grains, beans, bananas, and cruciferous vegetables.

A Shopping List for Better Skin!

Omega-3 Fatty Acids (for hydration and anti-inflammation; shiny hair)

- Fatty fish
- Walnuts
- Flaxseeds and chia seeds

Antioxidant-rich Foods (for anti-ageing)

- Berries (blueberries, strawberries, blackberries)
- Dark chocolate (85% cocoa or higher)
- Green tea

Zinc & Selenium (for acne control and healing; for hair growth and strength)

- Iron rich foods for
- Pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds
- Chickpeas and lentils
- Brazil nuts

Probiotics (for gut-skin connection & reducing inflammation)

- Yogurt (curd) and buttermilk
- Sourdough bread
- Pickle
- Fermented foods like kimchi and sauerkraut

Vitamin C (for collagen production and glow; stronger hair)

- Citrus fruits (oranges, lemons, grapefruits)
- Bell peppers (red and yellow)
- Guava and kiwi

Vitamin A & Beta-Carotene (for smooth skin)

- Carrots, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin
- Spinach and kale
- Eggs (especially the yolk)

Probiotics: Introduce live beneficial microorganisms through fermented foods like kombucha, kimchi, sourdough bread, buttermilk, idly, dhokla, pickle, or kanji made with carrots, beetroot and mustard seeds.

A healthy gut translates to a clearer, more vibrant complexion, as your digestive system works in harmony with your skin.

Beyond the Plate

While what you eat plays a pivotal role in skin and hair health, combining proper nutrition with external care routines can amplify your results. Remember to protect your skin with broad-spectrum sunscreen, avoid excessive sun exposure, and maintain a regular cleansing routine. When you merge internal nourishment with external care, you empower your body to naturally repair and protect itself from the harsh effects of summer.





Watch the

Dr. Rija Prathab

Manager – Billing & Insurance BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

Approvals for treatments apart, the timeline for submission of insurance claims is critical. Timely submissions, in line with the insurance company's given limits, are essential to ensure an easy and smooth claim process.

Then it comes to health insurance claims, one crucial factor that often gets overlooked is adhering to claim time limits. Delays in submitting your claims can result in rejections, even if your treatment is valid. Understanding the specific timeframes set by your insurer is vital to ensure smooth reimbursements or approvals for your medical expenses.

Cashless Claims

Cashless claims are one of the most convenient options for policyholders, as they allow you to receive medical treatment at network hospitals without having to pay upfront, with the insurance company settling the bill directly with the hospital. However, even for cashless claims, timely communication with is critical.

For Planned Admission: Intimate your insurance company at least three to four days before your admission. This ensures that your insurance company has enough time to pre-approve the treatment and settle the hospital bills directly.

For Emergency Admission: Inform your insurance company within 24 hours of hospitalisation without fail. By notifying them promptly, you give them the chance to pre-approve the treatment and streamline the billing process. Failure to notify your insurer within the stipulated timeframe may delay the approval process.

Reimbursement Claims

Reimbursement claims are for those who pay the hospital bills upfront and then seek reimbursement from their insurer later. This process requires careful attention to the documentation and submission time limits.



Submission Deadline: Insurance companies typically allow a submission window ranging from seven to 30 days after discharge, but this can vary depending on the insurance company. It is crucial to read your policy details to know the exact time limit your insurer follows. Some companies are strict, and even a one day's delay in submission can lead to rejection of your claim.

Documents Needed: When submitting a reimbursement claim, you'll need to provide the following documents for the insurance company to process your claim quickly and efficiently:

- Discharge summary
- Hospital bills
- Prescriptions and medical reports
- · ID proofs
- · A filled-out claim form

Gather all required paperwork before submitting your claim, as incomplete submissions can lead to delays or rejections.

What are Your Insurer's Time Limits?

While the standard submission window is typically within a month, always check your policy booklet or mobile app to confirm the exact timeframes set by your insurance companies. Some providers may have shorter claim periods and tight timelines.

In addition, it's important to remember that some insurers may have specific rules regarding the format and type of documentation required for your claim. A failure to comply with these regulations could delay the process, even if your treatment is valid. •

If you have any specific queries related to medical insurance aspects, write to us at info@bloomhealthcare.in



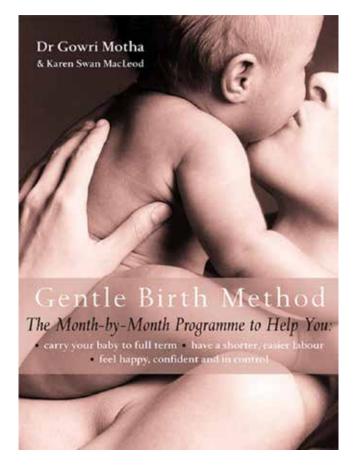


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