Volume 03 | Issue 07 | October 2026

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Hope Beyond Diagnosis

Being diagnosed with cancer does not mean you have to give up on your dream of having biological children. Read On.

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Noticed a Lump?

If you are caught between extreme reactions of panic or apathy on seeing a lump, we share a quick guide on when to do what.


1 Trimester


2 Trimester


3 Trimester


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Editor's Note



Dear Readers,

It was a very happy and proud moment for me when my team of my doctors (Dr. Jeeshia P., Dr. Ramya Viswanathan, and Dr. Swarna Ganesan) and I received the "International Outstanding Researcher Award" at the IISTAC (International Interdisciplinary Academic Conference) 2026, held in Coimbatore.

The award was given in recognition of our research on holistic birthing practices and outcomes for mothers hoping for a VBAC (vaginal birth after caesarean)—and our work was recognised as being among the best in the field. Dr. Jeeshia and Dr. Swarna accepted the honour on behalf of the entire team at the event in Coimbatore.

What makes me even more happy is the fact that VBAC is now getting greater recognition and that awareness is now growing about this birthing option.

Even today, with so much of information being shard on various channels, the fact that VBAC is a viable option seems to be lesser known then expected. Mothers who have had a C-section the first time often assume that C-section is the only available option—and often voice that to me when they come for consultations. Many of them are surprised when I mention that they can plan for a normal delivery, and that it will be a safe option.

Every mother deserves informed choices, proper choices and empathetic care through her pregnancy journey. While we doctors do our best to provide all of the above, the first step lies with the couple: In asking their doctor openly about the birthing options available, in spending time to understand what works best for them.

Every pregnancy and birthing journey is a unique one—and when we approach it with openness, positivity and care, the journey is as beautiful as the moment when you receive your little one in your arms.

Warm regards, ◆

Dr. Kavitha Gautham

Managing Director, BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

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Part 1

Evidence Meets Empowerment

The Science Behind Holistic VBAC Care

For mothers with a previous C-section, achieving a natural delivery can feel out of reach—until now. Doctors at BloomLife Hospital, with their award-winning clinical research, have shown how a holistic, person-centered approach can make a safe vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC) a empowering reality.



Dr. Swarna Ganesan
Consultant – Holistic Birthing
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

Surgical delivery rates are rising rapidly across India and the globe. While C-sections are vital medical interventions, unnecessarily high surgical birth rates carry risks—including surgical complications, longer recovery, and increased risks in future pregnancies such as placental abnormalities or scar tissue complications. Vaginal Birth After Cesarean (VBAC) offers a safer, natural alternative that minimizes surgical risks, reduces blood loss, prevents thrombotic events, and ensures faster postpartum recovery.

To evaluate the success of natural birth after C-section, a team of doctors at BloomLife Hospital—Dr. Kavitha Gautham, Dr. Swarna Ganesan, Dr. Nalini T, Dr. Ramya Viswanathan and Dr. Jeeshia P. conducted a clinical study tracking mothers with previous C-sections from 28 weeks of gestation through delivery. We are proud to share that this landmark retrospective analysis won the prestigious "International Outstanding Researcher Award" at the IISTAC 2026 (ISSN International Science & Technology Awards), proving the clinical value of person-centered naturopathic pregnancy care.

Remarkable Birthing Outcomes

The study evaluated mothers who underwent a Trial of Labor After Cesarean (TOLAC) using evidence-based holistic interventions. The clinical findings were striking:

- **50% Success Rate:** 1 in 2 women successfully achieved a vaginal birth.
- **Spontaneous Labor:** 73% of mothers went into labor naturally without artificial induction.
- **Intervention-Free Delivery:** Among those delivering vaginally, 63% experienced a completely natural birth without medical intervention.
- **Non-Medicated Pain Support:** 93% managed labor discomfort using non-medicated pain management techniques.
- **Comfort and Control:** 46% chose their own birthing positions during labor, and 59% had minor to no perineal tearing.

Stay tuned for Part 2, where we detail the specific holistic interventions, therapies, and care activities that made these remarkable birthing outcomes possible.

An Empowering Experience

Crucially, 88% of participating mothers rated their childbirth experience as deeply empowering and satisfying.

By addressing the preparation of the mind, spirit, and physical body alongside medical safety, person-centered holistic care helps mothers reclaim confidence in their bodies while safely lowering unnecessary repeat C-section rates. ◆



Part-1

Understanding Arthritis

Signs, Management, and Treatment Options



Living with joint pain can quietly shrink your world, turning simple daily movements like climbing stairs or standing up into painful challenges. Delaying care out of fear of surgery often leads to unnecessary suffering when gentle, non-surgical options can restore your quality of life. We evaluable common suggestions and share which one works best for whom.



Dr. Jayaprakash K.V.
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In the previous issue, we looked into what arthritis really is and what causes it. As explained, arthritis refers to the progressive degeneration of the joint structure. The ends of our bones are covered by a smooth, rubbery tissue called cartilage, which acts as a protective cushion and allows bones to glide effortlessly against one another. When this cartilage wears down or degrades, the joint loses its smooth surface. Eventually, as the cartilage erodes completely, bone begins to rub directly against bone. This friction is the primary source of the deep pain, stiffness, and inflammation that characterise arthritic joints.

Now that we know the main cause, what are some early signs to look out for? In particular, as knee osteoarthritis progresses, everyday functional movements become increasingly difficult. Patients typically experience:

- **Difficulty Rising:** Struggle and pain when getting up from a chair or rising from the floor.
- **Stair and Walking Stress:** Severe discomfort when climbing stairs and a progressive reduction in the distance one can walk without needing to sit.
- **Structural Deformity:** As cartilage wears unevenly, the legs may bow outward, altering overall body alignment.
- **Altered Gait:** Patients often develop a distinctive "waddling" or side-to-side swinging gait to compensate for knee instability and pain.

The table below shows at a glance how the person experiences increasingly difficult-to-handle symptoms as the disease progresses.

Disease Stage	Typical Daily Challenges
Early Stage	Mild stiffness; pain during prolonged walking
Moderate Stage	Difficulty climbing stairs and rising from chairs
Advanced Stage	Bowing of legs (deformity); altered waddling gait
Severe Stage	Severe pain at rest; complete loss of mobility

Evaluating Common Suggestions Given For Improvement

- **Sitting on the Floor and Squatting:** Traditional Indian habits such as sitting cross-legged or squatting promote hip flexibility and joint health, which is why hip arthritis is significantly less common in India than in Western countries. However, once knee arthritis is fully established, squatting increases joint stress and should be avoided.
- **Vitamin D:** While Vitamin D deficiency is widely discussed, it primarily affects bone density (leading to osteoporosis) rather than joint cartilage wear. For most individuals, spending 30 minutes in natural sunlight is sufficient.
- **Gym Workouts vs. Natural Movement:** Heavy weightlifting and building large muscle bulk are unnecessary for joint protection. What matters most is muscle tone and joint flexibility. Engaging in outdoor sports and functional movement exercises is far more beneficial for joint longevity than heavy gym training.

Why Patients Delay Care

In India, many patients delay seeing an orthopaedic specialist until joint damage is severe. This delay is usually driven by fear—specifically, the misconception that consulting a surgeon inevitably leads to an immediate recommendation for joint replacement surgery.

Joint replacement is never the first line of treatment. Surgery is reserved exclusively for extreme, late-stage cases where the joint cartilage is entirely worn away and conservative treatments no longer provide relief. Early medical consultation allows for effective non-surgical management that can preserve joint function for years.

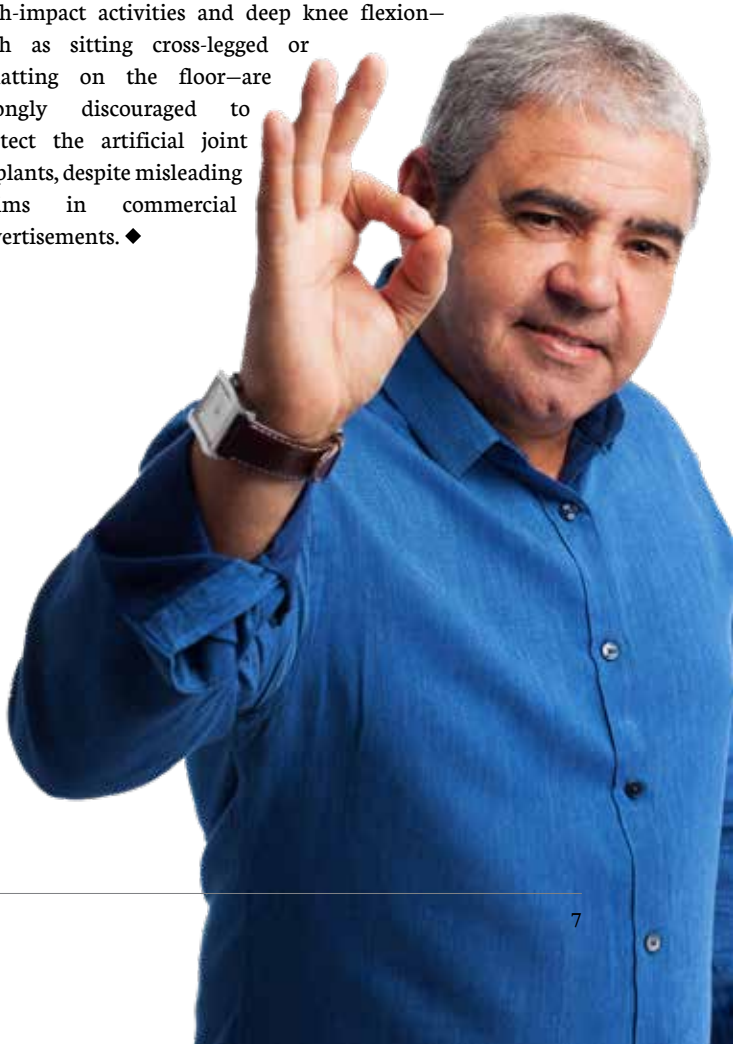
Non-Surgical Management and Rehabilitation

When caught early, arthritis can be managed through targeted, non-invasive strategies:

- **Targeted Physical Therapy: S**tructured exercises designed to strengthen the quadriceps and hamstring muscles, allowing them to absorb joint loads effectively.
- **Weight Management:** Reducing excess body weight significantly decreases the mechanical pressure applied to the knee joints during daily activities.
- **Pain Management and Supportive Therapies:** Under medical guidance, appropriate pain-relief protocols and supportive therapies (including traditional treatments like Ayurvedic Abhyanga massage to soothe muscle tension) help maintain joint mobility.

The Truth About Supplements and Post-Surgical Care

- **Cartilage Supplements:** Over-the-counter supplements like glucosamine, collagen, and turmeric extract are widely marketed, but clinical evidence showing they can regenerate or replace worn cartilage is lacking. While they may provide psychological reassurance, they do not repair structural joint damage.
- **Post-Surgical Expectations:** Following a joint replacement, high-impact activities and deep knee flexion—such as sitting cross-legged or squatting on the floor—are strongly discouraged to protect the artificial joint implants, despite misleading claims in commercial advertisements. ◆



How Much is TOO Much?

Crowds, Sweets and Social Visits



Dr. D. Balakumaran
Head of Paediatrics & Neonatology
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

Should your baby be at every family gathering? And should you really say no to every festive treat for your school-goer? Here is a simple guide to finding the balance (and fully enjoying!) this festive season.



The festive season is one of the happiest times of the year—new clothes, family visits, celebrations and, of course, plenty of sweets and snacks. But for parents of young children, it can also bring a familiar dilemma: How much is too much?

Should babies be taken to crowded gatherings? Can young children enjoy the sweets they are offered at every home they visit? And how do parents set limits without making children feel that they are missing out?

The answer lies in knowing where to exercise caution, where to allow some indulgence and, most importantly, how to build healthy boundaries.

Young babies and crowded celebrations

For very young babies, particularly those below six months, parents may want to be more mindful about crowded gatherings during the festive season, which also coincides with the flu season.

Babies who are otherwise well can generally travel from around 14 days after birth. However, when it comes to large gatherings, greater caution is advisable, particularly during the first six months when infections can be more significant.

This does not mean that babies need to be kept indoors throughout the festive season. Instead, parents can focus on minimising their exposure to large crowds. At family gatherings, for instance, the baby can be kept in a quieter, less crowded space rather than in the middle of a large group.

You don't have to say 'no' all the time

As children grow older, another festive-season challenge arrives: Food.
During festivals, sweets and savouries are everywhere. Children may receive them at school, at relatives' homes, during visits and through gift boxes brought into the house. Trying to eliminate every sweet or snack from a child's festive experience is unrealistic—and can turn food into an unnecessary battle.

For school-going children, particularly those above four years of age, this can be an opportunity to teach moderation.

If children are already accustomed to having occasional treats during the week, the festive season can allow for a little more flexibility. The important part is to maintain reasonable portions and frequency, rather than allowing every visit to become an unlimited eating occasion.

But what if every house wants to feed your child?
A child visits one home and is offered a sweet. At the next, there is another special snack. At the third, someone insists they have just one more.

For parents, saying 'no' repeatedly can feel socially awkward. Children, meanwhile, can become excited by the sheer variety of food in front of them.

This is where setting expectations before leaving home can help. Tell your child what the boundaries are: One serving, one sweet, or a particular amount that is appropriate for them. The exact limit will depend on the child's age and usual eating habits, but what matters is that the child knows the boundary beforehand. The same principle can apply to gifts and other temptations.

When children follow the agreed limits, reinforce the behaviour positively rather than scolding them in front of relatives or guests.

Some children need more careful planning
Not every child can be treated in exactly the same way.

If a child has a known food allergy, or parents have noticed a consistent pattern of symptoms after eating a particular food, greater caution is needed. In such situations, parents may need to plan social visits differently, let relatives know in advance what foods should be avoided or offer an appropriate alternative.

If parents notice a consistent association between a particular food and symptoms such as coughing or wheezing, it is worth discussing this with their paediatrician.

A Gentle Reminder
When visiting relatives or friends, children will be offered sweets. They will get excited, ask for more and occasionally push the boundaries.

That is part of growing up.

The role of parents is not to make the festive season perfectly controlled. It is to help children understand how to enjoy it without losing the healthy habits they follow through the rest of the year. ◆



Hope Beyond Diagnosis

Preserving Fertility in Cancer Care

A cancer diagnosis brings an overwhelming flurry of decisions, but long-term family planning does not have to be sidelined. With modern reproductive medicine, a diagnosis or high genetic risk no longer means giving up on your dream of having biological children.



Dr. Kavitha Gautham
Senior Consultant – Reproductive Medicine & High Risk Obstetrics
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.



Receiving a cancer diagnosis or learning of a strong family risk can feel daunting. However, advancements in the field of fertility mean that reproductive options remain well within reach for both men and women.

Early Genetic Assessment and Proactive Planning

When a mother or sister has experienced cancer, hereditary risks can be significantly higher. Individuals in high-risk families should consider genetic screening early—ideally in their early 20s.

A positive genetic test flags risk long before disease onset, allowing individuals to make informed decisions. Young women can plan marriage and pregnancy earlier or freeze eggs/embryos before undergoing risk-reducing procedures like an elective mastectomy.

Preserving Gametes Before Treatment Begins

For both men and women diagnosed with cancer, fertility preservation should ideally happen before starting chemotherapy or radiotherapy.

- **Men:** Can freeze sperm quickly with simple collection procedures before cancer therapy begins.
- **Women:** Can undergo controlled ovarian stimulation to retrieve and freeze eggs or embryos, preserving their reproductive potential for the future.

Even when treatments must start quickly, fertility specialists can coordinate short-window preservation protocols that do not delay urgent oncology care.

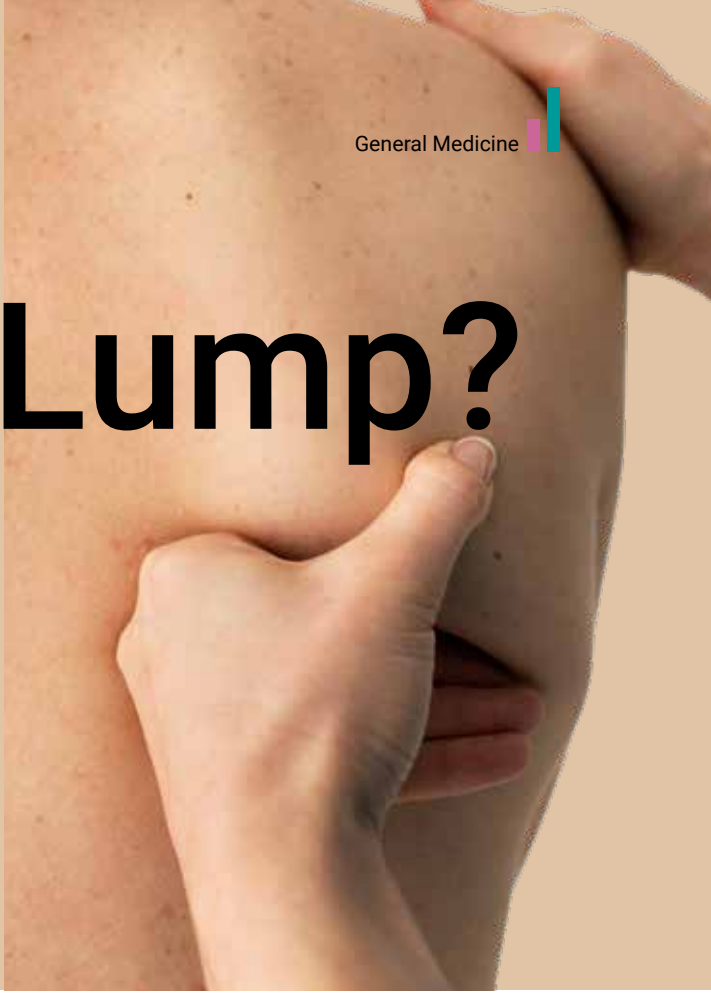
Pregnancy After Cancer Treatments

Different cancer treatments impact the body uniquely:

- **Chemotherapy** primarily affects ovarian reserve or testicular function.
- **Radiation** to the pelvic region can impact uterine elasticity or cervical tissue.

Despite these challenges, carrying a healthy pregnancy post-recovery remains achievable. In complex cases—such as borderline ovarian tumors—surgeons and fertility experts work together to retrieve eggs, freeze embryos, complete cancer therapies, and safely perform embryo transfers once the patient is in remission.

Most importantly, let us embrace hope: A cancer diagnosis or high genetic predisposition does not close the door on parenthood. By consulting a fertility specialist early, patients can protect their future reproductive options and focus on recovery with complete peace of mind. ◆



Noticed a **Lump?**

Here Is What to Do Next

You notice a small bump while bathing or getting dressed, press it once or twice and decide it is probably nothing. OR panicked that it might be a one-way ticket to a cancer diagnosis. While the truth is that no lump should be called 'normal' until a doctor has examined it, we look at a grounded approach to examining and gaining a prognosis with minimal tension.



Dr. Aiswarya M. Nair
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Lumps rarely develop with pain. Many are painless, grow slowly and cause no trouble in daily life, so we assume it to be a bit of fat, a boil that will settle or a swelling left over from a recent cold. The trouble is that an assumption is all it is, because harmless lumps and serious ones can look and feel very similar from the outside. Fear plays a part too, since many people avoid the doctor because they worry about what they might hear.

What a Lump Could Signal

A lump is a swelling or growth that forms under the skin or deeper within the body, and it can appear suddenly or develop slowly over time. Lumps vary in size, shape and feel, with some being soft and movable while others are firm and fixed in place. Its causes could be various things, such as:

- A lipoma, which is a soft and fatty growth, or a cyst filled with fluid,
- A swollen lymph node responding to an infection,
- An abscess that needs draining,
- A hernia pushing through a weak spot in the abdominal wall or
- A fibroadenoma in the breast

Most of these are benign, yet several still need treatment, and each one tells a doctor something about what is happening inside your body. In a smaller number of cases, a lump is an early sign of cancer, and this is exactly when early detection matters most.

Signs That Should Never Wait

Every lump deserves a check, but some need one urgently. See a doctor promptly if:

- A lump feels hard or fixed in place,
- Grows quickly,
- Lasts beyond two to four weeks,
- Comes with fever, night sweats or unexplained weight loss
- Has redness, warmth and pain, which can point to infection

Any lump in the breast or testicle should be examined regardless of its size, as should any lump with skin changes such as dimpling or ulceration.

Your Next To-Do

Finding a lump is not a reason to panic, because most turn out to be harmless. It is, however, always a reason to book an appointment. A short examination, and a scan if needed, can either put your mind at rest or catch a problem while it is easiest to treat. Whatever the lump is, do not diagnose it yourself and do not wait for it to hurt. Always remember, prevention is better than cure. ◆

Sweet Not Spiked

Or "How to Indulge This Festive Season Without Raising Your Sugar Levels". Feels like a tall order? Nor really? With the right approach to the festive spirit and accompanying feasting, you can enjoy yourself and keep a handle on your health parameters, too!

Department of Lifestyle Management
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

October has arrived, and with it, the most colourful stretch of the calendar. Navaratri brings nine evenings of Golu; Saraswati Pooja and Ayudha Pooja follow, all ending with Vijayadasami. And when things begin to settle, Deepavali is around the corner.

Along with the kolams, the lamps and the family gatherings comes something far less welcome—a steady climb in our sugar levels. Boxes of sweets arrive at the door, every festive visit brings coffee and snacks, and saying no to your grandmother's homemade adhirasam is impossible. The good news: You don't have to sit out the celebrations to stay healthy. With a few mindful choices, you can enjoy every festival and still keep your blood sugar steady.



Never Start with Sweets

When you consume sweet foods on an empty stomach, the sugar reaches your bloodstream quickly, causing a sharp spike followed by a crash that leaves you reaching for more. Instead, enjoy your sweet after a meal that includes protein and fibre, such as sambar, kootu, poriyal, curd or sundal. These slow down how quickly sugar is absorbed, keeping your levels steadier. On evenings when you're visiting several houses, have a light, balanced snack before you leave so you don't arrive hungry and fill up on sweets.

Savour Mindfully

Festive sweets are made for sampling, and that's exactly where the trouble begins. A piece of Mysore pak, a spoon of sakkarai pongal, half an adhirasam and a small cup of payasam may each seem small, but together they add up quickly.

Pick one sweet and enjoy a small portion slowly. You can also politely carry the sweet home and enjoy it after dinner. When you choose with intention, you'll often find that one piece satisfies you far more than five hurried ones.

Remember, 'Healthy' Sweets Are Still Sweets

Jaggery, honey, dates and dry fruit sweets are often seen as the healthier choice, but they still raise your blood sugar in much the same way as regular sugar does, and deserve the same portion control. A jaggery sweet is still a sweet, so treat these as occasional indulgences rather than guilt-free options.

Watch What You Drink

The filter coffee offered at every visit, rose milk, badam milk, packaged juices and soft drinks can add a surprising amount of sugar to your day. Because liquid sugar needs no digestion, it enters your bloodstream even faster.

Make water your default, and reach for neer mor, unsweetened lemon water, and tender coconut water in moderation, or coffee and tea with little or no sugar. Staying well hydrated also helps you tell the difference between thirst and the urge to snack.

Take a Walk After Your Meals

After a heavy festive lunch or dinner, the temptation is to settle onto the sofa. Instead, try a 10-to-15-minute walk. When your muscles are active, they draw on the sugar in your blood for energy, which helps bring levels down after a meal. Go one step further: Walk to your neighbours' homes for Golu instead of driving, take a stroll down the street to see the kolams and lights, or a short walk to the nearby temple.

Living With Diabetes? Plan Ahead

If you have diabetes or pre-diabetes, festive season calls for a little extra planning. Check your sugar levels more often than usual, especially on days with large meals or unusual eating times. Don't skip your medication or your regular meals, since long gaps followed by heavy eating can cause sharp swings.

Festive fasting needs special care, too. During fasts around Navaratri or Purattasi Saturdays, many of the foods that fill our homes (like sakkarai pongal, kesari, and pori) are high in carbohydrates. Instead, opt for sundal, made from chickpeas, green gram or black-eyed peas—since its protein and fibre release energy more slowly. Fasting can also affect how your medication works, so speak to your doctor before you fast so your treatment plan can be adjusted safely.

Festivals are about togetherness, gratitude and joy, and food will always be a part of that. The goal isn't to refuse but to enjoy them in a way your body can handle. ◆





A Patient's Guide

Demystifying Post-Hospitalization Claims

Leaving the hospital is a relief, but reading your final medical bill often brings fresh confusion. One of the most common stumbling blocks for patients is knowing where 'inpatient coverage' ends and 'post-hospitalization benefits' begin. Knowing how your insurance covers medicines, tests, and doctor visits after discharge can save you both stress and money during your recovery.



Dr. Rija Prathab
Manager – Billing & Insurance
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

When transitioning from a hospital stay to recovery at home, patients and families often face confusion over medical expenses. A common point of misunderstanding involves distinguishing between inpatient hospitalization costs and post-hospitalization expenses. Knowing how these claims work ensures you fully utilize your health insurance policy without unexpected out-of-pocket costs.

Inpatient Expenses vs. Post-Hospitalization Costs

Inpatient expenses cover everything administered during your hospital stay—from room charges and diagnostics to nursing care and daily medications up to your official discharge.

Post-hospitalization expenses, on the other hand, refer to medical costs incurred after you leave the hospital. According to IRDAI guidelines, these benefits typically cover:

- Prescription medications required after discharge
- Follow-up consultations with your specialist
- Diagnostic tests and investigations related to the initial admission

To qualify, these expenses must directly relate to the medical condition for which you were hospitalized.

How It Works

Consider a patient admitted to the hospital on October 1, 2026, and discharged on October 5, 2026.

- **During the Stay:** Medications, tests, and care administered between October 1 and October 5 are part of the main inpatient claim.
- **At Discharge:** The doctor prescribes antibiotics, painkillers, and antacids for five days post-discharge.
- **After Discharge:** The cost of purchasing these prescribed medications at home falls under post-hospitalization benefits, rather than the main inpatient bill.

Coverage Windows and Reimbursement

Depending on your specific insurance policy, post-hospitalization benefits typically cover costs incurred within 60 to 90 days after discharge.

Unlike cashless inpatient treatment, post-hospitalization expenses are generally claimed as a separate reimbursement claim rather than reopening your initial inpatient file. Patients must pay for these follow-up expenses upfront and submit a claim later with proper documentation.

Steps for a Seamless Claim

To process your post-hospitalization reimbursement smoothly:

1. **Keep Original Documents:** Retain all itemized pharmacy bills, diagnostic reports, and payment receipts.
2. **Match the Prescriptions:** Ensure every purchased medicine or test aligns directly with the official discharge summary.
3. **Submit Within Timelines:** Submit your reimbursement request within the window specified by your insurer (typically 15 to 30 days after completing follow-up treatment).

By understanding your policy details and keeping organized records, you can ensure a stress-free financial recovery alongside your medical one. ◆

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