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# 06

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# Editor's Note

**Dear Readers,**

By this time this magazine reaches your hands, we would have all celebrated our Indian Women's Cricket Team's amazing win at the 2025 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup. Whether you watched the historic, wonderful catch by Harman live, or relived the highlights several hundred times via reels (or both!), we can safely say that our entire nation was united in ecstasy over our "girls in blue" bringing home the coveted cup. Kudos to them!

While I was talking about this with a friend of mine, she commented on how such solidarity with the women's cricket team was a refreshing, positive change—a stark difference from even a decade back, when most of the focus, attention and fan following was trained on our men's cricket team.

Truly, it is a welcome change—but the change did not happen overnight. It has been many years in the making, with the efforts of every single coach, team member and captain quietly laying the groundwork for this momentous success. And we must never forget the fans and supporters who loyally kept showing up for them

through it all. Their quiet confidence, faith and positivity kept them going through times when things didn't seem as good, right until all of their efforts culminated in this victory.

It reminded of a quote I came across recently: *The harvest is not a good measure of your success, since many seeds are still germinating.* It is a good reminder that all our efforts don't provide results at one go. And not seeing the results we hoped for doesn't mean that the efforts put in thus far have gone to waste. Sometimes, we don't need to keep doing more and more until we get drained out, but instead keep moving at a steady pace, with patience and quiet perseverance.

And one day, for sure, all things will fall in place—we just have to wait until then. ♦

**Dr. Kavitha Gautham**

*Managing Director, BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.*

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*We want to hear from you! Please keep sending your feedback, suggestions and questions to [info@bloomhealthcare.in](mailto:info@bloomhealthcare.in).*

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# Contents

5

Reproductive Medicine & Fertility

**When Intimacy Hurts: Understanding Vaginismus**

6

Paediatrics & Neonatology

**When to Reach for the Medicine—  
And When Not to**

8

Better Living

**Seed Cycling**

9

Art of Birthing

**Take the Pressure Off**

10

Your Voice

**Keep Calm and Call the Hospital**

12

Obstetrics & Gynaecology

**Painless Lumps**

13

General Medicine

**From Silent Risk to Serious Threat**

14

Health Insurance

**Baby on Board?**



# When Intimacy Hurts

## Understanding Vaginismus

*Vaginismus is a deeply intimate condition, but it is also a highly treatable one. The most important step is acknowledging it without shame or blame. With guidance, gentle therapy, and emotional support from one another, couples can restore comfort, closeness, and confidence—not just in intimacy, but in their partnership itself.*

In the last issue, I touched on fecundability rate—a couple's chance of getting pregnant in any given month. As I had mentioned, that number is just 20%. In other words, natural conception at any given time happens only for 20% of couples.

There are several reasons as to why a couple may not get pregnant right away. And while physiological factors like ovulation and sperm health are commonly discussed, what often goes unrecognised are the emotional and psychological factors that shape sexual intimacy and connection between partners.

One such factor—still rarely spoken of—is vaginismus, a condition that can affect a couple's physical and emotional closeness, and, ultimately, their journey to conception.

### Understanding vaginismus

Vaginismus is a condition in which the muscles of the pelvic floor tighten involuntarily, especially around the vaginal opening. This tightening is not intentional—it is a mind-body response that can cause sharp pain or an inability to allow penetration. Because of this, women may avoid sexual intercourse altogether, and even the thought of penetration may trigger stress, fear, or anxiety. It's important to recognize that vaginismus is not caused by a lack of desire, interest, or love. Rather, it is the body's protective response—often rooted in past experiences, anxiety, fear of pain, or emotional discomfort.

### How Vaginismus Can Affect the Relationship

The experience of pain can lead women to avoid situations involving penetration. Naturally, this leads to reduced intimacy. Partners may begin to misunderstand each other's intentions—with feelings of rejection, guilt and shame adding to the mix of anxiety and fear. Over time, this avoidance can create a widening emotional gap. In some men, repeated difficulty during attempted intercourse can lead to performance anxiety, reduced confidence, and eventually erectile dysfunction.

The good news? Vaginismus is fully treatable, and most couples who seek guidance are able to achieve comfortable intercourse and restore emotional closeness.



**Dr. Kavitha Gautham**

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

### Treatment for Vaginismus

One of the most reassuring aspects of treatment is that it does not require medication or invasive treatment. Therapy focuses on reconnecting the mind and body by looking into:

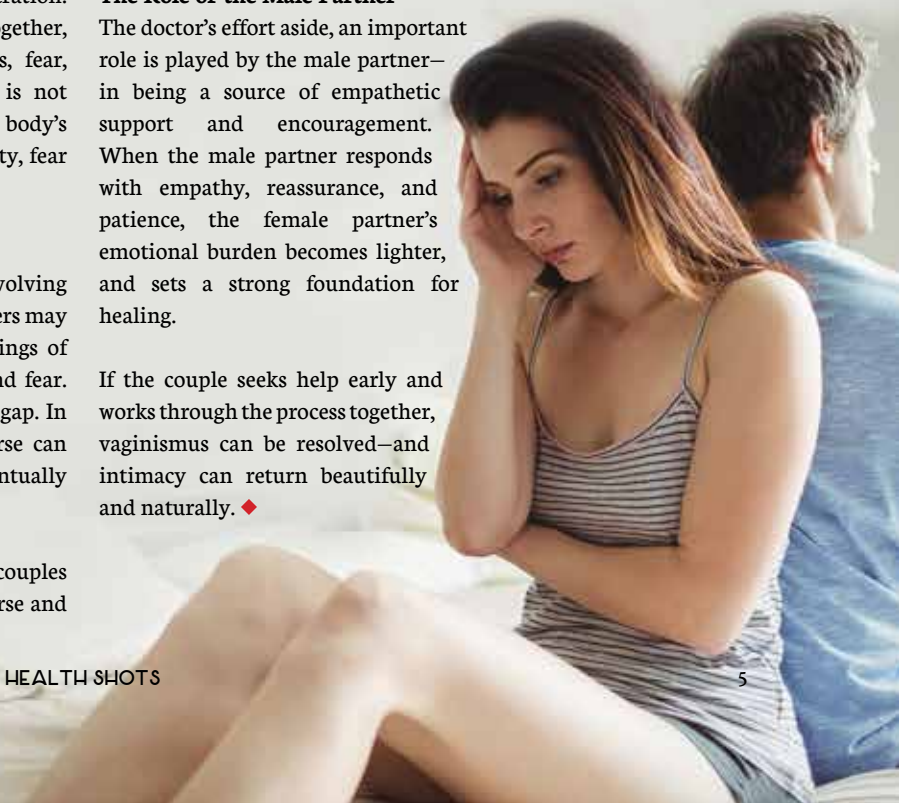
- Pelvic floor relaxation and rehabilitation exercises
- Use of vaginal dilators under guidance
- Psycho-sexual counselling to understand emotional triggers
- Reframing sexual intimacy with patience and compassion

Scope of treatment is decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature and severity of the condition—and it is important to remember that every couple's experience and healing pace is unique.

### The Role of the Male Partner

The doctor's effort aside, an important role is played by the male partner—in being a source of empathetic support and encouragement. When the male partner responds with empathy, reassurance, and patience, the female partner's emotional burden becomes lighter, and sets a strong foundation for healing.

If the couple seeks help early and works through the process together, vaginismus can be resolved—and intimacy can return beautifully and naturally. ♦



**Dr. D. Balakumaran**  
Head of Paediatrics  
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.



# When to Reach for the Medicine—and **When Not To**

*One of the most common questions we face as paediatricians is: What can I give my child when they fall sick? In light of the recent cough syrup scare, these questions take on even more weight. We look into how to approach these situations, such that your child is given the best in guided care.*

**W**hen it comes to childhood illnesses, especially cold, cough and fever, parents often fall into two extremes. Some prefer to avoid medicines entirely, while others confidently use over-the-counter medications based on past experiences. However, the safest approach lies in guided care—understanding when home treatment is appropriate and when a pediatrician must be consulted.

## **Self-Medication: A Habit to Reconsider**

Over time, many households grow comfortable using the same syrup or tablet that “worked last time”. But children grow, symptoms change, and the safety or suitability of medicines can vary significantly with age, weight, and underlying conditions. If you have been self-medicating your child frequently, it may be time to pause and seek medical advice.

Even commonly used medicines like paracetamol should only be given in the correct dose (usually based on the child's weight). And cough syrups in particular should never be assumed to be safe for all ages.

#### **When to Watch, and When to Seek Medical Care**

If a child develops a cough late in the evening, parents may feel unsure whether to wait till morning, call the doctor, or rush to the hospital. Here are simple guidelines:

You can wait and observe if:

- The cough is mild or just beginning
- The child has no breathing difficulty
- Fever is mild and responds to paracetamol
- Your child is active, feeding normally, and playful
- There is a known cause (exposure to someone who was sick, weather change, chocolate/preserved food triggers, etc.)

In such cases, you may use only those medications already approved earlier by your pediatrician as part of your “home emergency plan.”

You must seek immediate medical attention if:

- The child is breathing fast or using chest/neck muscles to breathe
- The child becomes unusually drowsy, irritable, or weak
- There is high fever not responding to paracetamol
- The child has poor feeding or repeated vomiting
- The child is less than 6 months old with one or more concerning symptoms

When in doubt, especially with infants, it is always safer to see the doctor. If it is night time, rush them to the Emergency for immediate attention.

Remember, medicines can be extremely helpful in relieving discomfort and supporting recovery—but only when used wisely. Every child is unique, and what suits one may not suit another.

The most important rule is simple: When in doubt, ask your pediatrician. Keeping open communication with your child's doctor, having a pre-discussed emergency plan, and avoiding unnecessary self-medication ensures safety, confidence, and peace of mind for parents and children alike. ♦

## **“At Home” Medicine Doses**

The most common medicines used at home for children are paracetamol and cough syrup—especially until the child is brought to see the doctor. We look at how to approach both administration of both medicines, particularly if the child is unwell at night and it is difficult to get to a doctor immediately.

#### **First, let's talk about cough syrups**

Not all cough syrups are created equal. In recent years, certain cough syrup combinations have been restricted by governing health authorities due to concerns over side-effects in children. This doesn't mean all cough syrups are unsafe—but it does mean that choosing the right one requires medical knowledge.

*For Infants (Below 1 Year):* Cough syrups should never be given without a pediatrician's approval. The child's airways and immune systems are still developing, and even mild medicine can affect breathing, digestion, or neurological responses.

*For Older Children:* Some safe, paediatric-approved cough syrups do exist. But the choice and dosage depend on, the cause of the cough (allergic, viral, post-fever, wheezing, etc.), the child's age and weight, and presence of associated symptoms (breathing difficulty, fever, vomiting, etc.). So while a pediatrician may advise keeping a “just-in-case” cough syrup at home, this should be done only after consultation, not independently.

#### **Coming to Paracetamol...**

Paracetamol remains one of the safest fever medicines for children—however, it is important to keep documenting the fever and give an additional dose only if needed. If the fever continues beyond 48 hours, or if the child seems unusually weak, it is important to consult your pediatrician.



# Seed Cycling

## The Feminine Nutrition Ritual

*Our bodies move in rhythms, much like the changing phases of the moon. Hormones guide these rhythms quietly in the background, shaping everything from our moods and sleep to our skin and*

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



**H**ave you ever noticed how your body seems to live in seasons? There are days when you feel clear, bright, creative, and energetic—as if your mind and body are working together effortlessly. And then, there are the other days: the bloating, the fatigue, the irritability, the brain fog that seems to dim your spark for no explainable reason.

We often call these “mood swings” or “bad weeks,” but what we’re really experiencing is our hormones trying to communicate with us. The menstrual cycle is not just a physical event—it’s a rhythm, a tide, a conversation.

And the most beautiful part? Food can speak that language.

Seed cycling is a gentle, natural wellness practice that helps your hormones find their balance again—not through control or suppression, but through nourishment. It uses simple seeds and calming herbs at specific times in your cycle to help your hormones return to the harmony they were always designed to have.

### So, What Exactly Is Seed Cycling?

Seed cycling is the art of syncing different seeds with the two main phases of your menstrual cycle. During the first half of the cycle, the body rises into estrogen, building, blooming, preparing to release an egg. During the second half, progesterone steps in—calming, grounding, guiding the body into rest and release.

Different seeds support these phases differently. Some gently help your body build estrogen. Others help clear out excess estrogen and encourage progesterone production. When taken at the right times, these seeds act like tiny nutritional messengers, reminding the body how to regulate, stabilize, and restore itself. The key is rhythm. It is not about throwing flax, pumpkin, sesame, and sunflower into every smoothie every day, but speaking to the body in season.

When you cycle with the seeds, it begins to feel as though your hormones finally exhale.

### Where the Hybrid Method Changes Everything

Traditional seed cycling focuses solely on hormonal balance. But in today’s world, something else is deeply woven into our cycles: stress. And stress can disrupt hormones faster than any diet or supplement can fix.

So, this evolved hybrid approach also supports the nervous system.

- In the first half of the cycle, Shatavari helps nourish rising estrogen and supports fertility and vitality.
- In the second half, Chamomile soothes the mind, eases cramps, calms the nervous system, and supports restful sleep—all of which are essential for progesterone to do its best work.

Because hormones don’t heal in a stressed body. They heal when the body feels safe. ♦

*In the following issue, we look into the science behind seed cycling, particularly why it works, and how to be practicing it.*





# Take the Pressure Off

## Addressing Constipation During Pregnancy

*Constipation in pregnancy is extremely common—but that does not mean it should be ignored. Your comfort matters, your digestion matters, your well-being matters. So, here is a little guide on what causes constipation during pregnancy, and what you can do to address it.*



**Dr. Swarna Ganesan**

Consultant – Holistic Birthing  
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

**P**regnancy is a time of profound change—physically, emotionally, and hormonally. Yet, amidst all these changes, many women quietly endure certain discomforts without seeking help. Constipation is one of the most common issues pregnant women face, yet it is also one of the least discussed. Many mothers hesitate to bring it up, hoping that it will resolve on its own. By the time the second or third trimester arrives, the problem often becomes much harder to manage.

Understanding why constipation happens during pregnancy—and how to prevent or ease it—can make this journey much more comfortable.

### What Causes Constipation During Pregnancy?

Constipation during pregnancy is not due to a single cause. It's the result of several changes happening simultaneously in the body.

Hormonal shifts play a major role—particularly the rise in progesterone, which slows down bowel movement. This is a normal physiological response, but it can lead to hard stools and infrequent bowel movements.

During early pregnancy, nausea and vomiting may make it harder to stay well-hydrated. Many women also experience food aversions, limiting their intake of fruits, vegetables, and other fiber-rich options. Add to this interrupted sleep, fatigue, and overall digestive sensitivity—and constipation can become a persistent discomfort if not addressed early. The important thing to remember is: It is common, and it is treatable.

### Gentle Ways to Relieve Constipation

Relief often begins with a few mindful, supportive lifestyle changes. Instead of gulping down large amounts of water—which may worsen nausea—sipping small amounts throughout the day helps maintain hydration without discomfort. Some women find that slightly cooler foods feel easier to tolerate than warm meals during early pregnancy. This can naturally help improve hydration and ease nausea.

When it comes to diet, variety matters. Many mothers focus on one particular 'pregnancy food', believing that eating more of one healthy item will solve everything. However, the key is diversity. Incorporating a mix of fruits and vegetables, in textures and flavors that appeal to you, can increase fiber intake without triggering aversions. Finding what your body comfortably accepts is part of supporting digestion during this time.

Sleep quality also plays a role. When sleep is disrupted, whether due to discomfort, anxiety, or hormonal changes, digestive function slows down. Prioritising rest whenever possible can improve overall gut health.

### When You Should Consider Medication

There are many safe medications for constipation during pregnancy, but they are not the first step. Before turning to allopathic treatments, it is worth exploring natural remedies, hydration practices, and dietary changes. Some women also benefit from traditional approaches such as warm herbal teas, gentle abdominal massage, or certain Ayush-based constipation-relief practices—as long as they are guided by a trained practitioner.

However, if the constipation becomes severe, painful, or you see signs of bleeding, do not wait. Speak to your doctor immediately. And remember: You never need to hesitate to share your symptoms with your doctor. Every concern is valid — and you deserve to feel heard and supported. ♦



# Keep Calm and Call the Hospital

*We've all been there—that moment of mild panic when we realise a doctor's prescription has gone missing. Today, technology has transformed the way medical information is stored and shared, making it easier to handle such issues.*

**Anita Krishnaswamy**

CEO, BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

**I lost my prescription and can't remember the name of the medicine prescribed by the doctor. I don't want to go through another round of consultation or disturb the doctor unnecessarily. Will the hospital oblige by giving me a copy of the prescription?**

If we think back to the days when our parents or grandparents visited the doctor, we might recall how carefully they preserved every note, prescription, or report they received. In those times, communication and technology were limited, which meant that every piece of information from the doctor was precious—and safeguarding it was a responsibility taken very seriously.



they wrote down. In this case, requesting for another appointment and getting a fresh prescription is the best way to go.

Before closing, it's worth emphasising one key message: Your medical records are the mirror of your health journey. Keeping your case sheets, prescriptions, and lab reports neatly filed and arranged by date is an invaluable habit. This practice becomes particularly important when you move cities, travel for extended periods, or if your regular doctor is unavailable.

A well-organised medical file provides the doctor with the background information they need instantly, enabling quicker and more accurate diagnosis and treatment. While technology ensures that urgent issues can be managed efficiently, we can play our part by taking preventive steps—like maintaining our medical records diligently—to minimise avoidable complications from arising. ♦

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SHOTS 11

Before closing, it's worth emphasising one key message: Your medical records are the mirror of your health journey. Keeping your case sheets, prescriptions, and lab reports neatly filed and arranged by date is an invaluable habit. This practice becomes particularly important when you move cities, travel for extended periods, or if your regular doctor is unavailable.



# Painless Lumps



**Dr. Nalini T.**

Senior Consultant –  
Obstetrics & Gynaecology  
BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

## What's Normal and What's Not?

*Found a lump—and immediately spiraled into panic mode? You are not alone. If a lump is painless, it might be harmless and need little to no medical attention. However, there are some cases where a visit to a doctor may be mandated. What should you do when? Read on.*

**N**oticing a lump anywhere in the body can be worrying, especially when it appears in areas like the breast, underarm, or vaginal region. The mind often jumps to worst-case scenarios, and it's natural to feel anxious. But the reassuring truth is that many painless lumps are completely harmless. Instead of viewing every lump as a red flag, it's more helpful to understand what your body may be communicating—and how to observe changes calmly.

A painless lump often feels like a small swelling or rounded bump just beneath the skin. It may shift slightly when touched, feel soft or firm, and remain the same size over time. These lumps commonly form from simple causes: A small change in the skin, a cluster of fat cells, or even leftover scar tissue from a healed infection. The body sometimes forms these tiny nodules naturally while repairing itself, and they may stay for years without causing any harm.

The location of the lump also provides useful clues. For instance, a lump in the underarm may sometimes be a lymph node reacting to irritation from shaving, waxing, deodorant use, or a recent infection. If it stays painless and unchanged, it is usually harmless. But if it enlarges, remains firm, or comes with fatigue or fever, a doctor may recommend a simple scan or blood work. Similarly, a lump in the vaginal or vulvar region may be a small blocked gland or cyst. Most of these are benign, but if one becomes suddenly larger or uncomfortable, a pelvic exam can help clarify what's happening and whether treatment is needed.

### When We Need to See a Doctor

Most of these lumps require no treatment at all—especially if they remain the same size, do not cause pain, and do not affect the surrounding skin. In such cases, simply observing them over time is usually enough. However, awareness is key: If the lump begins to grow rapidly, becomes painful, feels harder and fixed instead of movable, or if the surrounding skin turns red or swollen, these changes should be seen by a healthcare professional so that the cause can be understood early. In some cases, a doctor may suggest a biopsy—a quick and precise way to understand the nature of a lump. This does not automatically mean the lump is dangerous. Biopsies are simply a way of gathering more information so the right decision can be made.

The most important message to remember is this: finding a lump does not mean you should panic. Instead, observe it. Notice how it feels. Note whether it changes. Ultimately, staying calm, informed, and attentive is your best approach. And if something doesn't feel right, or if your instincts nudge you to ask, a doctor's reassurance can offer clarity and peace of mind. ♦

## Part 2

# From Silent Risk to Serious Threat



Dr. Aiswarya M. Nair

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BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

*In the previous issue, we touched on the causes behind the rising prevalence of diabetes and insulin resistance in India, and the people are at risk of these conditions. In this continuing part, we look into how insulin resistance is detected and how it can be managed.*

In its early stages, insulin resistance often goes unnoticed. The body may compensate for the resistance by producing more insulin, which keeps blood sugar levels in a normal range, delaying the appearance of symptoms. However, as the condition progresses, signs of blood sugar imbalance may become evident. These can include onset of obesity, persistent fatigue, increased thirst and hunger, tendency to urinate frequently, blurred vision and changes in the skin (appearance of darkened, velvety patches of skin or acanthosis nigricans, which is often seen on the neck or knuckles), alopecia or hair loss, hirsutism or excess hair growth, irregularities in menstrual cycle and even onset of infertility. In some cases, recurring yeast infections or hair follicle infections may also occur. If any of these symptoms sound familiar, it's important to consult a healthcare provider.

## Diagnosing Insulin Resistance

A point of concern is that the presence of insulin resistance can often go undetected until it is too late. There are no validated tests for diagnosing insulin resistance, so the doctor will usually take into account your medical history, family history, and a physical examination, followed by blood tests such as:

- **Fasting glucose:** Measures blood sugar levels after an overnight fast.
- **Hemoglobin A1c:** Provides an average blood sugar level over the past two to three months.
- **Glucose Tolerance:** Used to assess how the body processes glucose (sugar), by measuring blood sugar levels after a person consumes a glucose-rich solution.

## Managing Insulin Resistance

The most critical part of all this is the fact that insulin resistance may not be reversible in many individuals. The good news is that it can be managed with extreme focus and rigorous lifestyle changes. The most effective approach involves a combination of diet, exercise, and sometimes medication.

## Diet: What to Eat and What to Avoid

The cornerstone of managing insulin resistance is adopting a nutritious, balanced diet. A focus on low-carbohydrate, nutrient-dense foods is essential. Key dietary changes include:

- **Increase intake of non-starchy vegetables** (spinach, broccoli, and bell peppers), fruits (berries, apples), lean proteins (fish, chicken), legumes, whole grains, and nuts.
- **Limit refined carbohydrates** such as white bread, potatoes, sugary snacks, and high-sugar fruits like watermelon and dates.
- **Avoid sugary drinks** and opt for water, herbal teas, or other low-calorie beverages.

## Exercise: The Power of Movement

Regular physical activity is another cornerstone of managing insulin resistance. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week, such as brisk walking, cycling, or swimming. Exercise helps the body become more sensitive to insulin and aids in weight management.

## Medication: When Necessary

In some cases, if the condition has progressed to pre-diabetes or Type 2 diabetes, a doctor may prescribe medication to reduce the risk of complications. ♦



# Baby on Board?

**Dr. Riya Prathab**

Manager – Billing & Insurance BloomLife Hospital Pvt. Ltd.



*Welcoming a baby into the world comes with joy, excitement, and new responsibilities. One important step that often gets missed or misunderstood is enrolling your newborn*

**N**ewborn insurance may seem like unwanted paperwork at a time when all your attention is on your baby, but enrolling your little one early can make a significant difference, especially in case of unexpected medical needs. Moreover, contrary to common understanding, babies are not automatically covered at birth. In most cases, while the Individual or Family Floater Policy and the Corporate / Employer Group Health Insurance can cover the baby, the enrollment rules, waiting periods, and claim processes are not the same. So, it is important to know which rules apply to you and how to navigate them.

## ENROLLING A BABY UNDER AN INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY FLOATER POLICY

Under most personal health insurance policies, a newborn is not automatically covered from birth. In many plans, the baby can be added only after 90 days of age. Parents must submit a formal request—either through their insurance agent or directly to the insurer—to add the baby as a new member.

However, if the policy includes maternity benefits with newborn care coverage, there may be special provisions. In such plans, expenses for a newborn who requires medical attention immediately after birth—such as NICU care, phototherapy, or early treatment—can often be claimed using the mother's insurance card during the maternity hospitalisation. This allows the baby's bills to be included under the mother's claim until the baby is formally added to the

policy later. In these cases, the baby does not need to have a name yet—claims can be filed temporarily as “Baby of (Mother's Name)”.

## COVERAGE UNDER CORPORATE / EMPLOYER GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE

Corporate group insurance policies usually offer “day-one coverage” for newborns. This means that from the moment the baby is born, hospitalisation expenses may be covered—especially if the baby requires NICU care, oxygen support, antibiotics, or phototherapy. However, preventive care such as routine screenings and vaccinations is often not covered.

To activate newborn coverage under a corporate plan, parents must inform either the company's HR team, or the insurance support team, within the first few days after birth. The baby will again be enrolled as “Baby of (Mother's Name)”, with the option to update the baby's name later—usually within one year.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

In either case, whether you are opting for cashless hospitalisation or reimbursement, common documents include:

- Mother's discharge summary
- Insurance policy details (policy number / corporate ID)
- Birth details of the newborn
- A request form or email to add the baby to the policy

In corporate policies, approvals often happen within 24–48 hours, enabling cashless treatment. In individual policies, reimbursement may be used if the newborn is not yet eligible for coverage. The key is getting it all done with minimal stress is to follow these guidelines:

- Understand your policy's newborn coverage rules
- Inform your insurer immediately after birth
- Keep documents ready ♦

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*If you have any specific queries related to medical insurance aspects, write to us at [info@bloomhealthcare.in](mailto:info@bloomhealthcare.in)*

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