

INSTRUCTIONS for PATIENTS FILING FOR REIMBURSEMENT

You are encouraged to file a claim for third party insurance reimbursement. By filing a claim, you may receive partial or full reimbursement and you help to establish the need for reimbursement of lactation services. You may find it helpful to contact your insurance company and inquire how to file your own claim. Some companies have specific forms that they require you to fill out when filing a claim on your own and most companies have a filing time limit. You may also want to follow the instructions below.

1. Complete the upper part (Patient Information portion) of the Lactation Visit Receipt and sign the release of information on the right side directly under the Patient Information section.
2. Have either your doctor or your baby's doctor (depending on whose name is on your lactation receipt) sign the **Referral for Lactation Visit**. You will want to also copy this after obtaining a signature to keep one copy for your records.
3. Patient should mail a copy of the Lactation Visit Receipt with any other forms their insurance company may require along with a copy of the signed **Referral for Lactation Visit** to their insurance company.
4. Please be sure to keep a copy of your Lactation Visit Receipt, any other claim forms, referral script, etc. for your records and mark on your calendar when the claim was mailed in.
5. If, after 60 days, you have not heard from your insurance company, call them to check on the status of the claim. If you have not heard anything for 60-90 days, and cannot get any information from a phone call, you may want to write a letter to your insurance commissioner in your state and send a copy to the insurance company.
6. The top reasons that claims are denied are because it's not a covered service or the lactation consultant is not a provider on your plan. If it is because the lactation consultant is not a provider on your plan, then ask who the lactation consultant provider is. Most likely they will say that they do not have a lactation consultant provider on their plan. Then, you reply that you had a referral to be seen by this lactation consultant by your physician (or your baby's physician) because of **whatever problem is specified on the Lactation Visit Receipt**. Tell them that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all babies be breastfed for one year and that the AAP recommends mothers and babies be seen by a board certified lactation consultant when breastfeeding difficulties occur. The AAP also recommends that third party insurance reimbursement be made for lactation help.
7. Don't stop with **NO** from the first person you speak to. Request to speak to their supervisor and continue up the ladder if need be. The squeaky wheel is the wheel that gets oiled. If you want reimbursement, you may have to fight for it. Consumer demand is helpful in helping third party insurance companies decide what they need to offer as standard reimbursement services. There was a time when vaccines were not reimbursed, now most insurance companies reimburse for preventive medicine such as vaccines and well child visits. Breastfeeding is your child's first vaccine against many illnesses. It is not only optimal nutrition for your child, but countless studies support it as a definite health advantage and an important preventive health measure.

This is a sample of what your physician goes through to get reimbursement. Insurance companies are making physicians jump through hoops for reimbursement and to a large degree are controlling the quality of health care consumers receive. Letters to our government leaders from individuals, like you, are needed to insure attention be given to the fast growing health care problems our nation is facing. Each year the premiums on health insurance policies go up, but the coverage and benefits are reduced. You and your child have a right to optimal, quality health care.

For additional patient information about filing insurance lactation claims and how to appeal a denied claim visit Medela's web site on reimbursement at: http://www.medela.com/NewFiles/reburstmt_pro.html This site has sample letters to your insurance company and insurance commissioner that can be downloaded.