



Banafsheh Bayati MD

DIPLOMATE, AMERICAN BOARD OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

Happy New Year! I write this letter with humility for this virus we have all been dealing with for the past four years. It finally reached me, my first Covid infection, despite diligent attempts to avoid it. I can honestly say the experience was necessary. Many assume, incorrectly, that as physicians we are meant to absorb all the information necessary through medical school and residency. I find it fascinating that many mock physician's lack of training i.e. in nutrition or in menopause on social media posts, suggesting physician's lack of training. As I stress to many medical students that shadow me, a career in medicine is a privilege and a lifelong opportunity to improve and learn.

As physicians we are taught the vocabulary of medicine. We are taught how to critically think. We are taught how to research, to pick apart science, and to problem solve. Hopefully those who enter this field harness empathy, patience, and a caring personality. Most are disciplined, and accept the long hours of work. But it is through experience, practice, and self motivation that we continue to learn and grow in this profession. Our boards expect this of us. Our patients expect this of us. But most importantly, we demand this of ourselves.

The opportunity to grow and learn comes daily as I interact with you and your families. As a primary care provider, I am blessed to have a practice that allows me time to sit and listen with every patient. As a specialist, I find it imperative to be at delivery throughout the entire pushing phase. The experience and knowledge of each birth shapes the next. We are a community in health and wellness. In that, my own experiences with illness colors my practice. I became a better OB/GYN after experiencing a miscarriage, a Bartholin's cyst, and mastitis. Who could forget the fistula and many surgeries in 2016 following a screening colonoscopy? I have now experienced the fatigue, body aches, and relapsing symptoms of Covid!

Thus, as your physician and a woman going through perimenopause, mothering three children, running a business, a startup, and maintaining important relationships, I say this with knowledge: have humility for your health. Prioritize your health. Do not let illness be the sole impetus to slow down. Recognize the value of your health and take stock in what is working and what is not. Keep circling back to better ways of managing health through food, exercise, sleep and stress reduction. What can you change this year? Do not give up trying. I strive to find a better balance heading into 2024.

I will end this year's letter thanking you all for over 20 years of practice. This past year I have run into more teens whose parents introduce me to them as "the first person they met in life". I look at them and think, how is this possible, these are grown men? And of course I have the great pleasure in taking care of many of the babies that I have delivered who are now nearly young women. Even barring Covid, the end of the year leaves me exhausted. But your cards, pictures, letters, gifts and these yearly reflection letters rejuvenate me. I am grateful for you all, and hope 2024 brings us together again in health.

Annual Administrative Fee

Self	\$450
Each additional family member	\$300
Obstetrical Patient	\$2500

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