

To Our Patients from Out-of-Town or Out-of-State

Welcome to the Santa Fe Center for Allergy & Environmental Medicine! We're happy you've chosen us to help you, and we'd like to make your experience with us a good one, and of course a healing one. The purpose of this letter is to go over what you were told on the phone, and perhaps to add a few things to what was said.

Your First Visit

Your first office visit will generally take about 1-1½ hours -- or perhaps even 2 hours for cases expecting litigation or Workers' Comp. During this first visit, we'll go over your history in detail, and go over treatment options known at that time. *Please do not wear any scented agents when you come to the office*, and please do not smoke the day of your visit. Wear clean clothes without smoke or scents on them of any kind (we often have patients in the office who would be made severely ill by scents of any variety). If you have pertinent medical records and have not had them sent to us, please also bring those with you. **If you are taking medications, vitamins, herbs or other agents, please bring them all with you as well.**

Testing

If your problems are common to those we generally see, and if you have not had allergy testing, you may have been scheduled for some allergy skin-testing, P/N to foods and blood work when you come to see us. This is usually scheduled over a 2 day period, if all testing must be done, but sometimes we are able to perform the necessary testing in 1 day. On rare occasions, or for young children, *no* skin testing is required. On occasion, additional testing – such as hormonal, stool or other testing – may be ordered, some of which may be done from home. IV therapy with nutrients is initially done often for our patients with food intolerance and/or malabsorption, and on occasion you will receive an IV before you leave for home.

You probably have an idea what your schedule will be if you've already spoken to our office staff. Be sure you wear short sleeves or have your arms otherwise accessible (if it's cold, have a sweater handy). If you are scheduled for testing, be sure you don't take antihistamines or decongestants for at least 3 days before your trip. If you are taking Seldane, Claritin or Hisminal, be sure to try to discontinue it at least 3 weeks prior to your visit. If you are unable to stop these medications, or if you have questions about *any* medications you are taking, please call us and ask what to do.

You will have considerable discussion with Dr. Shrader during your time with us, and sometimes a visit will be scheduled with him immediately after preliminary testing. Blood work takes 7 to 21 days to be done, so it won't be ready during your first visit with us.

Follow up

After you've had the testing and we have begun to determine how to deal with your problems, you will likely leave Santa Fe and go home. We'll make a telephone follow up visit appointment with you before you leave (for about 10-21 days after your first visit) so Dr. Shrader can go over your testing results with you. If complete therapeutic options haven't been determined on your first visit, Dr. Shrader will also discuss those at that time.

If you are planning to have LDA immunotherapy, we will also schedule a telephone consult with one of our staff to explain the program thoroughly and answer any questions you might have about the LDA instruction booklet, or about any aspect of your treatment.

Planning for LDA

If you are planning to begin LDA immunotherapy, a good deal of information needs to be imparted to you before your first injection, and this can be confusing -- especially if it is given to you all at once, as it is when you are visiting from out of town! Again, a telephone follow up visit both with Dr. Shrader and one of the staff will be scheduled, and this should take care of your questions. The LDA Patient Instruction Booklet (the "pink book") should answer a great many of your questions. Please understand that we can never give LDA treatment the same week of skin testing.

If you have a problem with foods, sugar or with *candida albicans* (yeast), you will usually be placed on a special diet which usually needs to be followed 2 to 3 weeks prior to your first injection, and for 10 to 14 days after the injection. *The Healthy Fare Body Repair Kit*, Dr. Shrader's "diet" book, will give you details as to how to deal with your diet up until LDA. How foods are added back will be determined by your specific problems, if any.

Many medications interfere with LDA immunotherapy, so please be sure to discuss your medications with our staff so you are very clear about what medications you may take and those you may not, around the time of LDA.

If you are a patient with "complex" problems, LDA immunotherapy is usually given every two months for the first 6 to 8 injections, then the treatments are stretched out as far as you are able to tolerate. Kids usually require fewer injections, and may go to every three months quite soon after starting LDA. We know the LDA injection schedule well in advance, so you can make hotel accommodations ahead of time. The summer months are very busy in Santa Fe, so plan ahead! Our staff can give you information about finding a room if you need one, so just ask. We require 72 hour advance cancellation notice if you find you are unable to come for your visit.

We are not providers for any insurance carrier, so we don't bill insurance companies, but we give you all of the completed billing forms and we'll be glad to help you with the paperwork if needed. LDA is not covered by Medicare and we do not participate with Medicare or Medicaid, so you must understand *you may not file a claim with Medicare for our services*. We also do not accept Medicaid patients under any circumstances, even if it's only one of your carriers. If you have Medicare and a secondary insurance carrier, we will provide a letter to them stating we do not participate with Medicare. The reasons for all of this are political, not financial.

We sincerely hope your visits and continuing treatment at our office will be rewarding. Rest assured that your chances of recovery from whatever illness we are treating are generally well above 75%. We are always happy to answer any questions you may have about our program, so if you need answers, please call us.

More and more physicians around the country are using LDA immunotherapy (over 70 as of 12/96), so once you see us here, we may refer you to a physician closer to your area, if you so desire.

Again, welcome, and we'll see you in The City Different!

Dr. Shrader & Staff