

## **Desert Allergy Asthma & Immunology, Ltd.**

2821 W. Horizon Ridge Parkway, Suite 101

Henderson, NV 89052

(702) 212-5889

To Our Patients,

Welcome to our practice. Dr. Sean McKnight is a board certified physician in Pediatrics and fellowship trained in Allergy and Clinical Immunology. He completed his residency training in Pediatrics at the University of Nevada School of Medicine in Las Vegas, NV, and fellowship training in adult and pediatric Allergy and Clinical Immunology at the University of South Florida in Tampa, FL. The doctor and staff will provide you and your family members with the most current and scientific medical care, diagnostic testing, and treatment. This brochure has been prepared to provide you and your family with the most up-to-date information about our practice.

Some of the diseases and symptoms that we diagnose and treat are as follows:

- Allergic conjunctivitis
- Allergic rhinitis (hay fever)
- Allergic skin problems
- Anaphylaxis
- Angioedema
- Asthma
- Atopic dermatitis (eczema)
- Contact dermatitis
- Cough
- Drug allergy
- Exercise induced asthma
- Food allergy
- Headache
- Immune system disorders
- Insect allergy
- Itching
- Latex allergy
- Primary immunodeficiency
- Recurrent bronchitis
- Recurrent infections
- Shortness of breath
- Sinusitis
- Upper respiratory infection
- Urticaria (hives)
- Vocal cord dysfunction

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The physician will perform a history and physical examination, after which necessary diagnostic and laboratory procedures will be discussed in detail. Please feel free to ask questions about any tests or procedures ordered. Some of the procedures include, but are not limited to:

- **Skin test**, to determine your allergies to inhalants (pollens, dust, animals), foods, certain antibiotics, local anesthetics, and insect venoms.
- **Allergy injections**, to decrease sensitivity to allergens
- **Rhinoscopy**, to visualize the upper airway breathing passages by placing a small fiber optic scope in the nasal/sinus passages.
- **Patch testing**, to agents that cause a poison ivy type rash.
- **Pulmonary (lung) function studies**, to determine the efficiency of air flow in the lungs.
- **Methacholine challenge**, to determine the reactivity of your airway.
- **Oral challenges**, to determine food or medication allergy.
- **Tympanograms**, to determine mobility of the eardrums.
- **Patient education**, to explain environmental control measures, medications, nature of the disease triggers, and use of inhalers.

## **Goals**

The goals of the practice are to:

- **Reduce or eliminate hospital visits, missed work and school time.**
- **Improve patient's quality of life as well as the quality of life of the family members.**
- **Educate patients about their disease.**
- **Educate patients about self-management.**

Studies prove that care by allergy, asthma and immunology specialists reduces medical costs and improves the quality of life. You should maintain your right to choose your physicians and request physicians with expert training to meet your special needs.

## **The Initial visit**

You will be asked to complete a comprehensive questionnaire about your symptoms, current medications, past medical history, and personal, social, and family health history. **You are required to fill out this questionnaire before seeing the physician.** Your physician will carefully review this information with you prior to your physical examination. After the examination, he will discuss findings and recommendations with you. The information will be recorded in your permanent file and a letter will be sent to your referring physician, if applicable.

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### **Follow-Up Visit**

Office visits are scheduled periodically. Some visits are necessary for diagnostic purposes, such as skin testing, while other visits are necessary to reevaluate your condition. **A list of all your medications prescribed by this office or any other physician is required for each and every visit.** Please bring this list with you for the physician and staff to review.

### **Allergy Testing**

Skin testing is a preferred method to determine if a subject is allergic to an allergen. Testing is done to airborne allergens (trees, grass, and weed pollens, molds, dust mites, furry animals, and others), stinging insects, foods, medications, and sometimes latex and various biological products. A visit will be scheduled for skin testing. Please allow 2-3 hours for your appointment. If you are on a managed care plan, a referral will be necessary for any testing, including skin testing. Your physician will discuss the results of your skin tests after they are completed.

### **Allergy Injections (Immunotherapy)**

When allergen immunotherapy is indicated, an allergen vaccine will be prescribed based on your history and skin test results. You will begin a series of injections to be administered once or twice a week until maintenance is reached and, thereafter, the interval between injections will be gradually increased to once a month.

Allergic reactions from your allergen injections can occur. If an allergic reaction occurs, you will be immediately treated with epinephrine and other medications, as necessary, to stop the reaction.

Your allergen vaccines and detailed instructions about administering your injections will be provided for you if you are required to receive your injections at the office of your primary care physician. Under no circumstances will patients be allowed to self-administer their own injections either in the office or at home, due to safety concerns. Please provide the necessary referral and updates, as necessary, if an authorization number is needed for your allergen injections.

### **Managed Care / Insurance**

A referral must be obtained prior to your visit. Without an appropriate authorization, you cannot see the physician and expect your insurance company to cover the expense of the visit.

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### **Confidentiality**

Medical records are confidential. Consultation reports and updates are provided to your physician(s). Your signature is needed for insurance companies and medical personnel to obtain information. A nominal fee will be assessed if you request a copy of your records.

### **Telephone Calls (Dial 702-212-5889)**

**Emergencies:** Call 911 and proceed to the nearest emergency room. If you must contact the physician after hours, call the main number (702-212-5889) for the physician on-call or answering service.

**Appointments:** Call in advance to schedule follow up office visits, skin testing, rhinoscopy, and for new allergen vaccine(s). Schedule several weeks in advance for new vaccines to allow time for you to obtain authorization and for the office staff to prepare them. If you must cancel, please notify the office as soon as possible so that other individuals can be seen on that day. Please do not call after normal office hours, on weekends/holidays, or to the physician on-call to schedule an appointment.

**Prescription Refills:** Adequate refills are provided until your next follow up appointment. If additional medications are needed, make an appointment, then follow these guidelines when leaving a message for the staff:

- Give your name and/or the patient's name (spell the last name)
- Telephone number
- Name and strength of the medication
- Your pharmacy telephone number

Medication refill calls are taken until 3:00 PM daily, Monday through Thursday, and until 11:00 AM on Friday. Check the pharmacy after 6:00 PM since medication refills are called after hours. **No antibiotics, corticosteroids, or new medications will be prescribed by phone. You must see the physician to obtain any of these medications.** If you do not hear from us, please call again.

**Speak to Physician or Nurse:** Please leave a message for the nurse, medical assistant, or physician, including your full name, date of birth, telephone number, and question or concern. The physician and clinical staff will try to return your phone call within 24 hours during the weekdays.

**Referral Authorization:** Our staff can usually assist you with general questions about referrals and authorization. It is absolutely necessary to have proper authorization when your report to the office. Otherwise, you may have to reschedule your appointment. All patients on allergy injections must track their referral status and the date new authorizations are necessary. This information must periodically be updated so that injections can be continued at the appropriate intervals. It is your responsibility to monitor and obtain appropriate referrals.

**Billing/Insurance Inquires:** First, refer to your insurance policy about billing and insurance questions. Your insurance policy addresses most inquiries. If you still have questions, please call and leave your name, phone number, insurance plan, and a detailed message. You will usually be called back within 48-72 hours.

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**Website**

In the near future, we will have a web site that will contain information about practice, new medical concerns, environmental issues related to pollen and allergens in Henderson/Las Vegas, links to sites of interest, our patient medical history form, and other interesting bits of information.

**Schedule**

We will do our best to stay on time. Sometimes, for a variety of reasons we are not on time. Some of these reasons include:

1. We have a very sick patient who needs additional care and time.
2. Some patients are late for their appointments, disrupting our time frames as we still try to work them into our schedule.
3. Emergencies occur and we see these patients as soon as possible. We do this for them and we would do this for you, if the need arose. If not, the patient has to go to the emergency room where: (a) they are not seen by a specialist, (b) the costs are much higher, and (c) it takes the patient much longer to be seen and treated.

In summary, we try to provide you with the very best care, sometimes under unusual circumstances. These include: (1) insurance companies and primary care physicians who do not provide appropriate referrals and (2) patients who have changed insurance plans and have not notified us. This necessitates additional staff time prior to your visit. Please try to be as patient as you can and understand that the practice of medicine has become more complex and is certainly not always as predictable as all of us would like it to be. If we are behind in our schedules, and you feel like you cannot wait to see us, please reschedule at your convenience.

**Thank you**

We accept new patients and appreciate referrals of your family and friends to our practice. Thank you for choosing our practice for your allergy and immunology needs. We recognize that you have a choice and we appreciate your business. Please don't hesitate to let Dr. McKnight know if you have any questions or concerns about your visit. We will constantly strive to make certain that you receive quality care in a timely and pleasant manner. If you have any suggestions for our practice, physician, or staff, please write them down and let us know.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Sean McKnight, M.D.