



ELITE-CARE
RHEUMATOLOGY &
INFUSION CENTER

General considerations and recommendations for patients of Dr. Dhillon

Welcome to Elite-Care Rheumatology and Infusion Center (ECRI)!

- It is best to make your previous medical records available to our team prior to your visit with Dr.Dhillon. It would be difficult to get those medical records at time of visit, as the other facility may not send it back in a timely manner. If those records/ abnormal results are not available at time of visit, then Dr.Dhillon will recommend a plan and work up based on information available to her.
- Please make sure your records reflect information of all the physician/ clinic offices you would like your Rheumatology visits/ clinic notes and records to be sent to. Please make sure that information is up to date as records will be faxed/ mailed as reflected in the electronic medical records at ECRI.
- Please arrive 20 minutes prior to new patient appointments to complete new patient paperwork and registration process.
- Please arrive 10 minutes prior to follow up appointments to complete necessary paperwork.
- Please understand this is a clinic and patients are scheduled before and after your scheduled appointments. If you are arriving late for your appointment then that might affect whole clinic schedule. It's a team effort to keep the clinic running in a timely manner. If you are not ready in clinic room by the time of your appointment then your clinic appointment for that day might be canceled.
- **Test results** – If we see something worrisome on your labs, we always call right away. If we see something that explains a symptom or something that should be addressed prior to follow up, our team will contact you. We do not call to inform normal results. You can see your lab results on the patient portal. If you wish to discuss labs in more detail with Dr.Dhillon, then you can request a follow up appointment sooner than scheduled and our dedicated team will try to accommodate your request.

Patient portal – *****

Our phone number - 214-833-6965

The portal can be used for general inquiries (Example: “Can you please tell me what pharmacy my prescription was sent to?”) but is not used by the doctor to diagnose or treat patients or discuss alternative treatment plans. Please understand that when you send a portal message, it is first reviewed by a clinical assistant, and if needed it is forwarded to the physician.

- **Medical Assistants:** Help execute your Rheumatology care plan as formulated at the time of visit. They work hard to address your questions, and get your medications approved. They will call you with updates and changes in plans.
- Please make sure to request **refills** at scheduled office visits and enough medicine will be prescribed to last at least until your next appointment. **WE DO NOT ACCEPT REFILL REQUESTS FROM PHARMACIES.** You, the patient, must request refills at your appointment.
- Please make sure that your pharmacy information is up-to-date. Your Rheumatology prescriptions may need require more than 1 pharmacy.
- At time of clinic visit, you will be recommended a time frame to schedule follow up appointment. It is patient's responsibility to schedule the follow up appointment. Appointment slots fill up fast so please make sure to schedule follow up appointment at time of check out. Refills will only be addressed at time of follow up appointment, so its absolutely vital for you to schedule follow up appointment.

- If I refer you to another doctor, and you don't hear anything from that doctor's office after a few business days, please give our office a call so we help you, or you could try to reach out to them on your own if you can find their contact information online.
- **Take pictures!** Many manifestations of rheumatic disease are transient. If you take a picture of your bothersome physical finding (rash, swollen joint, ulcer, etc), we will have more information at your next appointment.
- **Prior Authorizations** – Many medications for rheumatologic diseases are very expensive. Your insurance company may require a prior authorization (PA) prior to approving coverage for your medication. Our team works on these PAs as quickly as possible, however, there are multiple factors that can result in delayed approval and obtaining the medication for you (we have no control over most issues that arise). Please be patient and communicate with us in a respectful manner. Sometimes the process goes quickly and is very easy, sometimes we run into many obstacles, but we fight very hard to get our patients what they need.
- **No Shows/Cancellation** within 24 hours – If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please give us at least 24 hours' notice. Failure to cancel appointment prior to 24 hours will result in \$50 no show fees.

Patients with rheumatic disease tend to be at a higher risk of **cardiovascular disease** (strokes, heart attacks, blood clots) than patients of the general population. If you have symptoms such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath, abdominal pain, or weakness, you should not wait and should go directly to the ER for evaluation. This most certainly includes women and young people. Please keep this in mind and consider discussing the following with your primary care doctor:

- Aspirin therapy, statin therapy, smoking cessation, therapy for high blood pressure

Patients with rheumatic disease are more susceptible to a variety of **infections**, whether or not they are on medicine to suppress their immune system. Please discuss vaccinations with your primary care doctor, including but not limited to:

- Influenza vaccination (yearly)
- Pneumococcal vaccinations
- Shingles vaccination
- HPV vaccines (SLE patients have a higher rate of HPV infection and precancerous cervical lesions)
- Tdap vaccination
- Hepatitis B vaccination, COVID vaccination + Booster

Patients with rheumatic disease are at a higher risk for a variety of **cancers**. Please make sure you discuss age-appropriate screening with your primary care doctor.

Patients with rheumatic disease are at a higher risk of **osteoporosis** and osteopenia (fragile bones, reduced bone density, increased risk for fractures). Please discuss your need for a bone density test (DEXA scan) with your primary care doctor or Dr. Dhillon.

Patients with rheumatic disease often have **dry eyes and dry mouth**, also known as sicca symptoms. If you have dry eyes, you should see an ophthalmologist for an exam, eye drops, and any further recommendations. For dry mouth, you should see your dentist regularly, stay hydrated, and can try Biotene mouthwash, swishing with coconut oil x 20 minutes, xylitol melts, sour and sugar-free chewing gum (Extra Sour Apple). There are medications available for this as well, however they do carry risk of significant side effects.

Knowledge is power. There is a wealth of free patient information available on <https://rheumatology.org/patients/diseases-and-conditions>