UPMC Scleroderma Center Information

What will happen at the first clinic visit?

Every patient will see one of our scleroderma experts (attending or faculty level) physicians. Adults will see either Dr. Thomas Medsger or Dr. Robyn Domsic. Patients under age 16 will see Dr. Kathryn Torok. All of them have many years of experience evaluating and managing scleroderma patients.

Since the University of Pittsburgh has a rheumatology training program, you may also be seen by a rheumatology fellow during the initial part of your visit. A rheumatology fellow is a physician who has already completed medical school, internship and a residency in either internal medicine or pediatrics. During fellowship, a physician spends 2-3 years receiving additional training in rheumatology.

If you are seen by the attending physician alone, your appointment will be for one hour which typically allows 20-30 minutes for history taking and physical examination and 30-40 minutes for discussion and counseling.

If you are seen with a fellow, the visit consists of 50-60 minutes with the fellow asking you about your symptoms, your past medical and family history and performing a physical exam. Then, 30-40 minutes will be spent with both the fellow and attending physician for review, discussion and counseling.

After the visit, a letter is written to summarize the visit and our recommendations to the referring physician or other physicians you designate. You may have a copy of this letter if you desire. If recommendations for additional testing are made, this can be set up at UPMC or, alternately completed at your local hospital with prescriptions from us. Your primary care physician or rheumatologist can also order tests that we recommend.

What about follow-up visits?

Frequently the patient returns to his/her local rheumatologist for continuation of management with our recommendations. We are happy to see patients for follow up visits, at their request or at the request of their physician(s). We take the primary responsibility for ongoing rheumatologic care for some patients who live in our geographic area, but cannot do so for individuals outside our referral area. However, we are always available to your physicians for consultation by telephone at 412-647-6700.