

## **Welcome to Stress Medicine Consulting!**

### **What To Expect From Us**

We are looking forward to your visit, and want you to have a great experience with your consultation, getting as much information and help as you need. So we want you to understand what we do, how the consultation is constructed and what the potential costs are likely to be. We can't predict the exact cost, as every patient is different, but knowing what to generally expect will help keep surprises to a minimum.

You may have been referred to us by your doctor, a friend, or found us yourself via the Internet. My evaluations are typically for Anti-Aging (Preventive Medicine for the Degenerative Diseases of Aging) for both men and women, Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement for men and women, Wilson's Thyroid Syndrome Treatment, (and other problems with low metabolic states) and Adrenal Fatigue. I also diagnose and treat Lyme disease and co-infections. I am often sought as a sort of 'detective' for complex medical problems that seem to involve many organs, because my training and interest is very broad spectrum, and because I take the time and have the interest to find the root cause of all the problems and symptoms a person has. If they are due to one cause and there is a good treatment for it, then we'll agree on the best approach and go for it. Usually though, complex problems have complex causes and it takes thorough analysis, a lot of listening and thinking on my part and yours, and often some extensive lab work to figure out the cause and cure. Occasionally consultations from other specialists, which I will coordinate with your care, may also be needed to get you to optimal health, which is my goal.

This office is not a "typical" doctor's office. We spend a great deal of time with our patients, so expect to be here for one and half to two hours on your first two visits, as we gather information about you, run tests and educate you about your health and well being. It's a pleasant environment, and we'll offer you tea, coffee, hot cocoa or cold water and a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere. Your first contact will be on the phone with one of my staff members, who will be asking some questions about your concerns and symptoms in order to confer with me about the priority for lab testing. (i.e., sometimes I may want to ask you to come to your first appointment fasting from the night before, or try to arrange for women to have that first appointment coincide with a certain point in their menstrual cycle so that the blood sample drawn that day will be most useful on the next visit). It saves your time and ours. Your next contact will be a 2-hour intake. Please bring any forms we have sent you already filled out, as well as other records you may have regarding your health with you for your appointment. The interview is to get your complete medical history, vital signs, a brief physical (without pelvic or rectal exam) and in some cases some specific testing will be done such as body fat analysis, Wilson's Thyroid Questionnaire, or other relevant laboratory work. You can shorten part of this initial intake time by completing the Medical History Form in this packet and sending it back to me before your visit, either by mail or fax. Then I will review my notes, and briefly examine you and determine whether lab work\*\* should be done that day and discuss this with you.

\*\* (We typically draw the lab here and send it to three different labs, which means we do a good deal of the work for them, preparing the specimens, centrifuging, drawing off serum or plasma, freezing or refrigerating...it can sometimes take a couple of hours if many tests are done). This is a separate fee from what the lab charges for the actual performance and reporting of the lab test, and is usually reimbursed by insurance.) I can give you a requisition to have the lab work done at a lab of your choice, but often they don't perform the requested work because they aren't used to seeing some of the tests I order, and we often get incomplete results. But if you wish, I am happy to provide a lab requisition for you to get lab work done where you prefer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We use LabCorp, Quest, Hunter, Diagnostex, Genova, Doctor's Data, IgeneX, Metamatrix and Sanesco Labs.

The second visit with Dr. Rinker will be to go over lab results. This may take anywhere from 1 to 2 hours. For your convenience, I record this session and provide you with a CD-ROM recording at the end of the session. I or one of my staff will, after the appointment go over the recommended supplements and hormones to make sure you understand their applications and whether there are any precautions with each supplement or medication. The first and second visits, both about 2 hours are charged at approximately \$475 each.

After that, we may meet again for a follow up appointment that may range from half an hour to an hour, depending your needs, evaluate how well treatment is working and do fine tuning on treatment plan. Fees for these subsequent visits will be \$400 for the first hour and \$250 for each additional half hour. I encourage you to contact the office for questions by email or phone if you are having side effects or do not understand some aspect of your treatment. There may be times when there will be a charge for this service, if it involves more than 5 minutes of service, accessing and changing your medical record. The fee can be \$25-150 for email or phone questions or requests, depending on length and complexity, as they involve staff time, my time and maintaining your records appropriately. I hope you understand that we are doing our best to be able to afford to provide excellent quality care.

There is about a month between the first and 2<sup>nd</sup> visit then the follow up visit will probably be about 4 to 6 weeks later, as we wait for test results, or for your response to treatment. As time goes on and we (hopefully) address all of your symptoms, the visits will be less frequent and shorter and of course lab testing is seldom as extensive as the initial visit. When there are hormone metabolism issues or complex problems we may meet more frequently.

The laboratories charge their own fees and will bill your insurance if you have it. If you do not have insurance, we have negotiated reduced fees with some of the labs LabCorp, for example, provides a 20% discount to self paying patients, but a larger discount for self paying patients when drawn at our office. When you have trouble with your insurance company, and they want additional information, different CPT codes, more information in order to pay for services, this takes a great deal of staff time as insurance companies are generally not forthcoming about exactly what it is they need in order to provide reimbursement. As you might guess, this is to their advantage. We will assist you in this if you wish, but will charge an administrative service charge of \$35 per hour for this service. Sometimes it is very simple, and takes 5 minutes, but sometimes it's time consuming. We encourage you to see what information is specifically needed and why before engaging our staff time, as we have a small staff. Your consideration is appreciated and when you really can't get anywhere with them, we will do our best.

**Summary of Costs for Office Visits and Procedures** Here is the cost breakdown for this first visit:

Clinical Interview and Exam	\$ 475
Body Fat Analysis	\$ included
Dr. Rinker's Exam	\$ included.
Lab Draw and Prep	\$30

**Cost for 2<sup>nd</sup> 1.5 to 2-hour Interview with Rinker**

\$475 for the first 1-1/2 hours-2 hours, and \$250 for each additional half hour . Usually, this is completed in 2 hours or less. It can go over that time if genetic testing is done, or other very complex testing. (see explanation above). This visit includes a recording of the visit on CD- ROM at no additional cost, and an extensive information packet explaining your results and treatment recommendations.

**Subsequent Office Visit Costs**

\$160-190 for a short visit

\$250 for a long visit (to go over lab results for example)

\$400 for an extended visit (i.e., annual review or extensive lab work or complex problems) \$25-150 for e-mail, phone or short treatment change consults (see explanation above)

### **Administrative Fees**

Lab processing and blood draw: \$ 30 depending on # of tests we prepare

Written reports: \$350 per hour for chart research and report time by Dr. Rinker.

### **Insurance Billing and Reimbursement**

We do not bill insurance companies for you and are not contracted with any insurance companies, nor with Medicare or Medi-Cal. We will provide you with a receipt, but we expect payment in full at the time of the visit, by cash, check or charge card. The invoice will have CPT codes and ICD-9 diagnosis codes so that you can submit it to your insurance company for reimbursement. If you purchase supplements that I have prescribed for you, we will put them on a separate receipt for insurance purposes or for reimbursement from your company's medical reimbursement program. By the way, you do not have to pay sales tax on supplements that are prescribed and dispensed by a physician to treat a medical condition, which is a nice discount of 9.25 %!

### **Our Commitment To YOU**

We are prepared to do the "detective work" necessary to be sure that we find the cause of your problems so you will be feeling well. That's our dedication to you. I realize that in disclosing up front that this can be a long and somewhat costly investment, you might feel intimidated. All I can say by way of reassurance is that most of our patients tell us that they feel taken seriously, sometimes for the first time, and that they are very relieved to find a place where their "whole self" and well-being is considered and treated, rather than a single symptom dismissed with a pill in five minutes. This takes a lot of work on our part, but this is the only way I feel I can do a good job for you. I expect that you will learn a lot, you will feel better or I will find someone who will help you feel better, and the human touch makes it all worth doing. We love our success stories.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tedde Rinker and Staff