

The Consultative Exam Process: What To Expect



You've submitted your disability claim, and now they are asking you to get a Consultative Exam (CE). Why?

The Disability Determination Services (DDS) is reviewing your claim. There are times when they feel that they need more information regarding your medical status to make a decision on your claim. When this happens, the SSA requests that you have a Physical or Mental Consultative Exam that the SSA will pay for out of their pocket. Depending on the nature of the exam, you will see either a medical doctor or a psychologist at a time that is determined by the SSA and at a location that is dependent on the type of doctors they have available and how close they are to the claimant.

We often end up with a lot of questions from our clients about the Consultative Exam.

The most common is "do I have to go?". We always advise our clients that it is in their best interest to go to the appointment and answer all questions to the best of their knowledge and ability, because this provides the claimant another opportunity to establish medical evidence in support of his or her disability. It is also important to put forth your best effort should a doctor ask you to take any physical or mental tests. The claimant's level of effort will be recorded by the examiner, and the SSA will use a remark of "good effort" as an indication that the claimant was credible throughout the evaluation; and a remark of "poor effort" or "exaggerated symptoms" can hurt a claimants' credibility with the SSA adjudicator.

Another question asked is what to do if they can't make the appointment assigned to them. It is imperative to contact the SSA right away to let them know you would like to reschedule. If a claimant is scheduled for a Consultative Exam and doesn't show up or

communicate with the DDS that the appointment needs to be rescheduled, a decision will be made based solely on the information provided. The reason the DDS requested a CE is because they felt they had inadequate information. If a claimant doesn't show up to a CE, the DDS will make a decision on this inadequate information and oftentimes it does not turn out favorably.

The third most common question is "what can I expect from the actual appointment?". It's important to remember to treat it like any other doctor's appointment. In order for the doctor to make the best determination of your disability, they need all the information that the claimant can offer. The doctor conducting the examination will only conduct the test or exam and get information specifically requested by the DDS. They will not prescribe medication or a treatment nor will they take part in making a decision on whether you are disabled or not according to the SSA guidelines. They will simply gather the information they need and send the report to the DDS. The report will also include detailed remarks such as whether you arrived on time to your exam, if you were cooperative, and if you carried with you an assistive device or not. If you do not use an assistive device (such as a cane or walker) on a regular basis, then you should not take it with you to the exam. Once the report has been submitted, the DDS will use the information provided by the consultative examiner to make a decision on your claim.

March is National Social Work Month



Did you know that March is National Social Work Month? Social workers are typically highly skilled and educated people who have devoted themselves to serving others in need. We have had the opportunity to work with several local organizations such as [Disability Link](#) and [North Fulton Community Charities](#) who serve people in need including the disabled. While working with them, we have come in contact with many great social workers who have become such an amazing resource to us and our clients. We just want to say thank you to their staff and specifically the social workers this month for everything you've done to help us serve our clients.

Spring Is In The Air!
To Our Clients



Spring is officially here with the Spring Solstice falling on March 20. Spring always brings a sense of hope and joy as the flowers start to blossom and the weather gets warmer. We are finally able to get out and enjoy a day outside, energized by the sun's Vitamin-D. For our clients with arthritis and musculoskeletal pain, it can mean improvement of their discomfort as the cold weather falls away to the warmth of spring.

In my house, we decided to welcome spring by enrolling our two and half year old into his first soccer season. Not only will this be a fun and educational activity for my son to engage in, but as a family, it will require us to spend more time outdoors and enjoy the better weather as we watch and encourage him on the soccer field. My father loves springs because it means he can finally enjoy his favorite hobby - woodworking. It's too cold in the winter to work in the garage on his wood projects, so he becomes like a child when the spring arrives and he can finally start making plans for his next wood project.

What are some of the things that you may be able to enjoy this spring that winter stood in the way of? Whatever it is, we hope this spring brings you better health and a new beginning for you and your family.

Administrative Announcement:

Our quarterly survey is out, and we want to hear from you!



In order to make sure we are on track to providing the best possible experience to our clients throughout the long, tedious and technical Social Security Disability process, we are asking them to complete a short survey on how we are meeting their needs.

We value the feedback from each of our clients and appreciate them taking the time to complete the survey. Check your inbox for the survey!

Calendar of Events

March 2015

3/2: In court, Atlanta GA

3/14: Sara presents on "Social Security Disability and Your Rights As a Patient" at Chron's & Colitis Foundation of America Event at Emory Conference Center

3/20: Sara presents on Child SSI benefits for families with special needs at FOCUS

3/24: In Court, Albany GA

3/25: In Court, Atlanta GA

Contact

The Khaki Law Firm

'We help people get through the Social Security Disability process with personalized legal care.'

Main Office: 3562 Old Milton Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30005

By Appointment Only: Buckhead & Marietta

Local (678) 228-8688
Toll Free 1 (866) 394-4925
www.TheKhakiLawFirm.com



.....

Stay Connected

