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Pre-Surgical Psychological For Bariatric Surgery Patients

The Purpose of the Evaluation

Bariatric surgery is a life-altering event. Many patients may share common reactions and paths after having the surgery. However, every patient must be treated as an individual. Because of this it is important to do a thorough assessment of each person to try and determine what individual and unique challenges each person may face as the role of food changes in their lives. In this way plans may be made to meet these challenges in the smoothest way possible. The purpose of the evaluation is to support the long-term success of your surgery and lifestyle changes.

The Evaluation

The evaluation has been designed in accordance with the American Society for Bariatric Surgery's "Suggestions for the Pre-Surgical Assessment of Bariatric Surgery Candidates." The evaluation consists of two parts which will take place within the same appointment. One part is the completion of standard psychological tests. This typically takes one and a half to two hours for most people to finish. For these tests, there are no right answers or wrong answers. They are designed to learn as much about you as possible (attitudes, behaviors, emotions) in a relatively brief time. The other part of the evaluation is an interview with Dr. Bongo that usually lasts 45-60 minutes. The information from the interview is then combined with the information from the tests and a report is then sent to your physician. In most cases, the report should be delivered to the physician that referred you to me within one week after your evaluation has been completed.

Location

Dr. Bongo will complete your evaluation in Cheyenne at the Healing Center at 2909 Bent Avenue, Cheyenne WY 82001. This location is ADA compliant.

Cost

The total cost for the evaluation is \$660, unless additional time is required. Most insurance plans are accepted. Dr Bongo is an in-network provider for Blue Cross Blue Shield, Aetna, Cofinity, InterWest Health, TriCare, Magellan, First Choice of the Midwest, First Choice Health, Medicare and *Wyoming Medicaid*. Dr. Bongo's billing company, Psychiatric Billing Associates, will verify your insurance and obtain preauthorization for payment from your insurance company if needed, and if time allows. Psychiatric Billing Associates will submit a claim to your insurance carrier on behalf of Dr. Bongo and your insurance carrier will pay Dr. Bongo directly. You will not have to pay for the entire cost

of the evaluation upfront unless you chose to not utilize your insurance. However, payment for the evaluation services may be required before your report is released. In case your insurance carrier does not pay as intended Dr. Bongo does ask for a credit card guarantee of payment for the evaluation. Patients are expected to pay at the time of the evaluation any co-pay or deductible that may be due.

For the convenience of her patients Dr. Bongo also accepts credit card payments (Visa, Master Card, Discover Card and Health Savings Account debit cards. *Please note that American Express cards not accepted*). For those individuals choosing not to use their insurance the cost for the evaluation is reduced to \$360 when payment is received at the time of the evaluation in the form of cash or check drawn on a local bank. This saves Dr. Bongo the administrative costs of billing insurance and also allows immediate payment for her services. If you wish to pay with Visa, MasterCard, or Discover card at the discounted rate at the time of the evaluation, the charge will be \$375.

While each insurance company is different, many insurance companies typically pay for most of the cost and your out of pocket expense will be the amount of your co-pay or co-insurance (assuming your deductible has been met). Please note this is not a guaranty of what your insurance carrier will pay. Even within insurance companies the payment rates may be different for different policies. Some insurance companies (BCBS of Wyoming) will not pay for my services until your surgery is precertified. *If your surgery is not precertified by BCBS of Wyoming, the full cost of the evaluation will be your responsibility. Please know that I typically do not write your evaluation report on the same day we meet. This will explain why 2 dates of service appear on your explanation of benefits and billing statements. Because there are 2 dates of service, some insurance companies will require that you pay 2 co-payments, instead of 1. It is recommended that you call your insurance provider and ask about your benefits for CPT codes 90791 and 96101, billing with the medical diagnosis code E66.01.*

About Dr. Bongo

Caroljean Bongo earned her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Argosy University Honolulu in 2005. She has practiced as a Licensed Psychologist in Laramie and Cheyenne since August 2006. She currently sees patients in Cheyenne Wyoming only. In her practice she works with adult individuals, and completes psychological evaluations with Bariatric surgery candidates. She is affiliated with the American Psychological Association, the Wyoming Psychological Association, The Society for Personality Assessment, the National Eating Disorders Association, the International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals, and the American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS). Dr Bongo has specific training and experience working with individuals with eating and weight concerns, including weight loss surgery candidates. She has attended the annual meeting of the ASMBS and Obesity Week a number of times over the past 9 years and completed over 1100 bariatric psychological evaluations.

Caroljean welcomes your calls and would be happy to answer any questions you have regarding your upcoming evaluation.