

## “WHY DO I NEED TO HAVE A PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION?”

Having a psychological assessment prior to this procedure is required by your insurance company. Pain is not a quantifiable sensation, thus as a prerequisite to approval, your psychological status needs to be assessed to assist in the determination that the pain you experience is real, and that there are no underlying untreated psychological conditions, such as severe depression, anxiety, etc. that could make any treatment less effective or even inappropriate. Because of the potential risks and subsequent impact on health—of making things far worse than they presently are (it is after all, an invasive procedure around your spine)—the evaluation will also be used to determine your readiness psychologically for the procedure. And knowing *beforehand*, that you are struggling with mental health difficulties can ensure that proper support and treatment is in place *prior* to the procedure, to enhance and increase the likelihood of your success.

This clearance can be performed by a psychologist, psychiatrist, or by a physician that knows you well such as a primary care physician that sees you regularly. Once we receive this clearance we will be able to proceed with the authorization process. Thank you for your participating in your care and if you have any questions please ask our providers here at the Spine and Pain Institute of New York.