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Facts and Figures

MALNUTRITION

Did you know?

- Malnutrition is a major public health problem, not always obvious in our affluent and increasingly overweight society.
- Whilst malnutrition affects people of all ages, it is significantly more common in older adults - 1 in 3 older people living independently are at risk of malnutrition¹
- Even when identified, malnutrition is often not treated.
- Reduced food intake is a major cause of malnutrition. Food intake declines because of the effects of disease and its treatment, for example poor appetite, swallowing problems and the side effects of drugs.²
- More than 50% of hospital patients don't eat the full meal they are given and 30% of nursing home residents eat less than half their lunch, often failing to meet their nutritional needs.^{3,4}
- Malnourished patients experience more complications and more frequent, longer stays in hospital than their well-nourished counterparts.
- Malnutrition has been shown to impair function, mobility and independence, especially in older patients.
- Malnutrition is associated with higher mortality rates and higher infection rates.

The Figures

- An estimated 20 million people in the EU are at risk of malnutrition, and 33 million across all of Europe.^{5,6}
- About 1 in 4 people in hospital are at risk of malnutrition, or are already malnourished.⁷⁻¹³
- More than 1 in 3 patients in care homes are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition.^{1,11,14-15}
- As many as 1 in 3 older people living independently are at risk.¹
- Malnutrition affects all age groups, for example 1 in 5 hospitalised children in the Netherlands are malnourished.¹⁶
- Up to 50% of malnourished people receive no nutritional intervention.^{17,18}
- In the EU the consequences of malnutrition are estimated to cost €120 billion per year, €170 billion across Europe.^{5,6}
- The economic cost of malnutrition is estimated to be double the economic cost of obesity.¹⁹

ORAL NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS (ONS)

Did you know?

- ONS are an effective and non-invasive solution to tackling malnutrition
- Both Cochrane²⁰⁻²² and NICE²³ cite ONS as having significant clinical benefits for malnourished patients, when compared to standard care.
- ONS are proven to increase energy and protein intake in hospitalised patients and in nursing home settings without decreasing food intake.
- ONS use is consistently linked to lowering mortality and complication rates for malnourished patients, when compared to standard care.
- Malnourished patients have fewer readmissions to hospital when given ONS.
- Community patients given ONS have fewer healthcare visits at home, and fewer and shorter hospital admissions.²⁴
- The cost of prescribing ONS in the community may be offset by preventing future hospital admissions and, when a high protein ONS is used, can lead to a reduction of overall hospital readmissions by 30%.²⁵

The Figures

- Use of ONS in UK hospitals saves on average €1,000 per patient based on the length of stay costs (surgical, older and stroke patients).²⁶
- The use of appropriate interventions, such as high-protein ONS, can reduce the average length of hospital stay by 30% in malnourished patients²⁶
- Use of ONS reduces mortality by up to 24% compared to standard care, particularly in under-nourished older people.²
- Use of ONS has been shown to produce a reduction in complication rates of 25 - 50% vs. routine care in a wide variety of patient groups.^{2,23}

Contact

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