Identifying Malnutrition

Nutritional status in newly diagnosed patients with cancer

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BACKGROUND: Malnutrition is common among patients with cancer, but little attention is given to its risks and consequences.

OBJECTIVES: The aim of this study is to assess the nutritional status and identify the factors associated with malnutrition among newly diagnosed patients with cancer.

METHODS: Patients admitted with newly diagnosed cancer at a teaching hospital in Malaysia were recruited from January to April 2015. Nutritional status was assessed before treatment initiation, and patients were classified into three categories: well nourished, mild to moderately malnourished, and severely malnourished. Clinical parameters and disease characteristics were also assessed.

FINDINGS: A total of 132 pretreatment patients were recruited into the study. About half were severely malnourished. Patients with stage III cancer had the highest prevalence of severe malnourishment. Clinical parameters and disease characteristics were significantly associated with nutritional status. Demographic variables were also statistically significantly associated with severe nutritional status.

KEYWORDS
nutrition status; malnutrition; nutritional assessment; risk factor

DIGITAL OBJECT IDENTIFIER
10.1188/17.CJON.E23-E29