Does Malnutrition Contribute to the Cancer Patients Distress

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31% to 87% of patients experience malnutrition and weight loss

Consequences of malnutrition:
- ↓ response & tolerance to treatments
- ↑ risk of complications
- ↑ health care costs
- ↓ QOL
- ↓ survival

35% to 45% experience distress

Definition of distress
Objective & Method

- **OBJECTIVE:** To explore the relationship between malnutrition and psychological distress

- **METHOD:**
  - 213 patients evaluated in a Cancer Nutrition Rehabilitation Program (CNRP) from Oct 2006 to Sept 2008
  - Patient Generated-Subjective Global Assessment (PG-SGA)
  - Distress Thermometer (DT)
  - PG-SGA was correlated with the DT
Patient Generated-Subjective Global Assessment (PG-SGA)

- **Part 1** (patient-self assessment)  
  - Weight change: 0-5  
  - Change in food intake: 0-4  
  - Symptoms affecting food intake: 0-24  
  - Activity level: 0-3

- **Part 2** (clinical nutritionist assessment)  
  - Assessment of metabolic demand: 0-12  
  - Other health conditions: 1-6  
  - Physical findings: 0-3

**Total score of the 2 parts**: 1-57

- Nutritional status  
  - Well-nourished or anabolic: SGA-A  
  - Moderate or suspected malnutrition: SGA-B  
  - Severely malnourished: SGA-C
Distress Thermometer (DT)

- Problem checklist
  - Physical problems (which include eating, nausea, diarrhea…)
  - Family/relationships
  - Emotional problems
  - Spiritual/religious concerns
  - Information problems
  - Practical problems
  - Other problems

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RESULTS

Table 1. Correlation of the DT vs the total PG-SGA score and weight loss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total PG-SGA score</th>
<th>Weight loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distress thermometer</td>
<td>r=0.17 p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>r=0.19 p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## RESULTS

Table 2. Mean difference of distress across nutritional status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutritional Status</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Well-nourished</td>
<td>3.6  2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Moderately malnourished or suspected malnutrition</td>
<td>4.2  2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Severely malnourished</td>
<td>4.6  2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-Test

- p=0.04
- p=0.07
CONCLUSION

Psychological distress is correlated to weight loss and nutritional status

☑ Evaluation of the nutrition status should be included in the evaluation of distress experienced by cancer patients

☑ In order to promote clinical rehabilitation, it is important to provide nutrition therapy and guidelines to patients including psychological therapy and counselling