



Nutrition Care for Malnutrition Disorders in Adults and Children

Isla William*

Department of Food science, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada

DESCRIPTION

Malnutrition is an disorder refers to the deficiencies or excesses nutrient intake and imbalance of essential nutrients or impaired nutrient utilization by the body. Malnutrition contains under nutrition, overweight, obesity, as well as diet-related non communicable diseases.

There are 4 kinds of malnutrition are wasting, stunting, underweight, and deficiencies of vitamins and minerals.

Symptoms includes reduced appetite, lack of interest in food and drink, getting ill often and taking a long time to recover, wounds taking a long time to heal, feeling tired all the time, feeling weaker, poor concentration, feeling cold most of the time [1].

Main causes for malnutrition includes Low intake of food- Some people develop malnutrition because there is not enough food available, or because they have difficulty eating or absorbing nutrients, Mental health conditions, Alcohol use disorder, Social mobility problems, Digestive disorders and stomach conditions.

Body mass index

It can be calculated by weight in kilograms divided by height in metres squared. A BMI for healthy adults usually lies in between 18.5 to 24.9. Those having BMI between 17 to 18.5 could be slightly malnourished and those having BMI between 16 to 18 could be moderately malnourished and those having BMI less than 16 could be severely malnourished [2].

Diagnosis of malnutrition in children

In children weight, height is measured and compared with the charts having the expected average height and weight for a child of particular age group. Children having a slower growth may also be malnourished[3].

Mid-upper arm diameter

This is used in children to detect an upper arm circumference. Less than 110 mm is also used to define malnutrition in children. In children thickness of skin folds is also measured.

Other tests for malnutrition

Other tests include thyroid function tests, estimation of the intestine for Coeliac disease, Decrease in levels of Calcium, Phosphate, Zinc and vitamins, low levels of cholesterol and albumin[4].

Maintain balanced diet by taking more nutrients, Snacks must be taken before and after meals, taking drinks having lots of calories, getting supermarket deliveries at home.

Feeding tubes

If a patient is unable to eat or feeling difficulty in swallowing an alternative way of getting nutrients may be needed. Nasogastric tube, Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy – PEG – tubes are used Sometimes the solution containing nutrients that's fed directly into the blood through a tube in a vein known as parenteral nutrition. These treatments are usually started done at hospitals, but they can be continued at home under the advice by a doctor [5].

Treating malnutrition in children

Malnutrition in children is caused by long term health conditions, for this conditions hospital treatment is needed. But this is not required in all cases of children with malnutrition.

Treatment for children involves as

1. Dietary changes- such as eating food high in energy and nutrients.
2. Treatment for medical conditions causing malnutrition.
3. Vitamin and mineral supplements.

Correspondence to: Isla William, Department of Food science, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, E-mail: islawilliam@email.com

Received: 05-Aug-2022, Manuscript No. JNDT-22- 18570; **Editor assigned:** 08-Aug-2022, Pre QC No. JNDT-22- 18570 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 29-Aug-2022, QC No. JNDT-22- 18570; **Revised:** 05-Sep -2022, Manuscript No. JNDT-22- 18570 (R); **Published:** 12-Sep-2022, DOI: 10.35248/2161-0509.22.12.204

Citation: William I (2022) Nutrition Care for Malnutrition Disorders in Adults and Children. J Nutr Disord Ther. 12:204.

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4. High-energy and protein nutritional supplements – if the other treatments are not enough on their own.

Nutrition Focused Physical Examination (NFPE) is an essential test method for diagnosing malnutrition. Focusing on the general characteristics such as muscle wasting, edema, and subcutaneous fat loss to specific micronutrient related deficiencies NFPE is very sensitive test done for assessing nutritional status

CONCLUSION

Severely malnourished children are extra cared and need to be fed and rehydrated with great care. They cannot be provided with an normal diet in case of severe malnutrition. They must

need special care in hospital. Once they're well enough, they can gradually begin to eat an normal diet and continue this at home.

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