

Malnutrition in Hospitalized Children

Durá-Travé T*

Opinion

Malnutrition in hospitalized children is a public health problem that has increased in prevalence over the last few years. It is a condition that can have serious consequences for the child's health and development. The prevalence of malnutrition in hospitalized children varies between 13.3% and 82%, depending on the study and the population. The most common type of malnutrition is undernutrition, which is caused by a lack of energy and protein intake. This can be due to a variety of factors, including poor feeding practices, illness, and hospitalization. Malnutrition in hospitalized children can lead to a range of complications, including delayed wound healing, increased risk of infection, and longer hospital stays. It is therefore important to identify and address malnutrition in hospitalized children as early as possible. The European Commission (EC) and the European Agency for Food Safety and Food Inspection (EFSA) have developed guidelines for the assessment and management of malnutrition in hospitalized children. These guidelines recommend the use of standardized assessment tools, such as the Pediatric Nutritional Risk Score (PNRS) and the Screening Tool for the Assessment of Malnutrition in Pediatric Patients (STRONG). The PNRS is a simple and quick-to-use tool that can be used to identify children at risk of malnutrition. The STRONG is a more comprehensive tool that can be used to assess the severity of malnutrition. Both tools are based on a number of factors, including weight loss, muscle wasting, and laboratory abnormalities. The EC and EFSA also recommend that healthcare providers should provide nutritional support to hospitalized children who are at risk of malnutrition. This can be done through a variety of methods, including oral feeding, enteral nutrition, and parenteral nutrition. The goal is to ensure that hospitalized children receive the nutrition they need to recover and return home as quickly as possible.

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*Corresponding author: Durá-Travé T, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Navarra, Spain, Tel: 34-948-270037; Fax: 34-84842-9924
 E-mail: ateodoro.ura.trave@cfnavarra.es

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