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Diagnostic criteria for malnutrition : consequences for the nutrition teams

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

RE : Letter to the Editor « Diagnostic criteria for malnutrition : consequences for the nutrition teams », in response to : « Diagnostic criteria for malnutrition- An ESPEN Consensus Statement » Cederholm T, Bosaeus I, Barazzoni R, Bauer J, Van Gossum A, Klek S et al. Clinical Nutrition 34 (2015) 335-340.

Dear Editor,

We read your article relating to the proposal for new diagnostic criteria for malnutrition with interest (1). We are keen to highlight this initiative helping clinicians to document and target nutritional interventions.

However, we are concerned by the second option in which, in order to be taken into consideration, weight loss must be accompanied either by a BMI < 20 kg/m^2 for individuals <70 years old (or <22 kg/m^2 for individuals ≥70 years old) or a reduction in the Fat Free Mass Index. While weight loss and BMI are both of value as screening tools, at the time of the diagnosis, the weight loss would only subsequently be taken into consideration for BMIs inferior to the abovementioned values.

However, the presence of a normal BMI does not exclude malnutrition at all. The evaluation of weight loss and biological doses demonstrates a malnutrition prevalence of between 35 and 45% for an average age and BMI of 60 years and 25 kg/m^2 at the time of admission to hospital (2). In their study on the relevance of BMI in characterising the nutritional state of cardiac patients, Gastelurrutia noted that that index did not indicate the patients' true nutritional state. Although classified as having a normal BMI or being overweight, malnutrition rates of 53 and 22% were found respectively (3).

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