Home Care Enteral Feeding

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Contents

VII Preface

IX Foreword

XI Contributors

1 Malnutrition in the Developing World: The Lack of Food Scenario
   Labadarios, D. (Tygerberg)

15 Are Older People Starving to Death in a World of Plenty?
   Thomas, D.R. (St. Louis, Mo.)

31 Physiological vs. Pathological Changes of Nutritional Status over Life Time
   Müller, M.J.; Bosy-Westphal, A.; Geisler, C.; Onur, S. (Kiel)

45 Home Enteral Nutrition
   Demographics and Utilization in the United States
   DeLegge, M.H. (Charleston, S.C.)

59 Home Enteral Nutrition
   Epidemiology and Legislation in Europe
   Van Gossum, A. (Brussels)

73 When Does Malnutrition Become a Risk?
89 What Are the Goals of Nutritional Support?  
The Example of Home Enteral Nutrition  
Hébuterne, X.; Schneider, S.M. (Nice)

103 Oral Protein and Energy Supplementation in Older People:  
A Systematic Review of Randomized Trials  
Milne, A.C.; Avenell, A. (Aberdeen); Potter, J. (Glasgow)

127 Efficacy of Enteral and Parenteral Nutrition in  
Cancer Patients  
Bozzetti, F. (Prato); Bozzetti, V. (Milan)

143 Ethics and Economics in Nutritional Support  
Buchman, A.L. (Chicago, Ill.)

167 Pathophysiology of Weight Loss in Older Persons  
Morley, J.E. (St. Louis, Mo.)

179 Interaction between Nutrition, Intestinal Flora  
and the Gastrointestinal Immune System  
Lochs, H. (Berlin)

189 Psychoimmunology of Nutrition  
Lesourd, B. (Clermont-Ferrand)

203 How Can We Impact the Immune System with  
Pre- and Probiotics?  
Schiffrin, E.J.; Donnet, A.; Blum, S. (Lausanne)

219 How Can We Modulate Cytokine Production and Action?  
Cynober, L. (Paris)

233 How Can We Improve Functional Outcomes?  
Elia, M. (Southampton)

249 Concluding Remarks

251 Subject Index
Preface

The nutritional status of older adults living at home is poor. On average, persons over the age of 70 years consume one third less calories compared to younger persons. In dietary intake studies, 10% of older men and 20% of older women have intakes of protein below the United States Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA), and one third consume fewer calories than the RDA. Fifty percent of older adults have intakes of minerals and vitamins of less than the RDA and 10–30% have subnormal levels of minerals and vitamins. Sixteen to 18 percent of community-dwelling elderly persons consume less than 1,000 kcal daily.

The reasons for this decline in nutrient intake are myriad, including loss of appetite (anorexia), inadequate food resources (starvation), physiological reductions in anabolic hormones or energy expenditure (sarcopenia), and disease-related loss of weight (cachexia). In ambulatory clinic patients, a pathological cause of undernutrition can be identified in 93% of older persons and 90% of younger persons. Most of these patients (89%) will have potentially treatable causes for their undernutrition. The syndrome of cachexia, the cytokine-induced wasting of protein and energy stores, is due to the effects of disease. Cytokines are related to a number of disease conditions, including cancer, end-stage renal disease, chronic pulmonary disease, congestive heart failure, rheumatoid arthritis, and AIDS. Systemic inflammation mediated through cell injury or activation of the immune system triggers an acute inflammatory response.

In this volume, a distinguished panel of international experts in nutrition address the state-of-the-art in understanding nutrition in community-dwelling older adults. The epidemiology of undernutrition in the developing and developed world are addressed by Professors Labadarios and Thomas. The utilization of home enteral nutrition in the United States and in Europe are reviewed by Professors DeLegge and Van Gossum. The physiological changes in nutritional status are surveyed by Professors Müller, Soeters, and Morley. Professors Hébuterne, Milne, and Bozzetti address the practical evaluation of nutritional support in community-dwelling older persons, and Professor Buchanan examines the ethical considerations of enteral feeding.
Preface

The impact of psychological factors, probiotics and the immune system, intestinal flora, the relationship of cytokines in nutrition, and functional outcomes are described by Professors Lesourd, Schiffrin, Lochs, Cynober, and Elia.

We wish to thank the distinguished faculty for sharing their insights and their expertise in this volume. We commend this volume to you as an in depth review of the state-of-the-art in community nutrition. Both what is known and directions for future research are explored.

David R. Thomas and Herbert Lochs
As clinical nutrition plays an increasing role in the management of patients at home, often for a much longer period than for a hospital stay, the topic ‘Home Care Enteral Feeding’ was chosen for this 10th Nestlé Nutrition Workshop of the Clinical and Performance Nutrition Program, which took place in June 2004 in Potsdam, Germany.

Physicians and dieticians have the important task of detecting malnutrition of patients in time, and subsequently to improve their nutritional status. In this workshop a lot was learnt about the nutritional status of people in different parts of the world, the reasons for malnutrition, the various possibilities on how to support nutrition, the regulation of appetite, and the potential modulation of the intestinal flora and immune functions; the aim being to improve the functional outcome of patients.

I would like to thank the chairmen, Prof. Herbert Lochs, Berlin, Germany, and Prof. David Thomas, St. Louis, Mo., USA, who are recognized experts in the field of long-term enteral nutrition, for consolidating the program and inviting the opinion leaders in various divisions of enteral nutrition as speakers. Physicians from 14 countries contributed to the discussions that are published in this book.

Dr. Mike Possner and his team from Nestlé Nutrition Germany provided all logistical support, enabling the participants to enjoy the German hospitality. Dr. Philippe Steenhout from Nestlé’s Nutrition Strategic Business Division in Lausanne, Switzerland, was responsible for the scientific coordination. His cooperation with the chairpersons was essential for the success of this workshop.

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