When patients become malnourished, they are less likely to receive their full oncology treatment and can require treatment breaks, treatment holds, or dose reductions. These may reduce the efficacy of their treatment.

**Nurses** are in the best position to identify patients who are at risk for malnutrition. By providing early nutrition interventions and deciding if and when to refer to a Registered Dietician-Nutritionist, you can improve patient outcomes.

PreMiO study: a prospective observational study of 1,952 patients reported:

- 43% were at risk for malnutrition at the first oncologist appointment.
- 64% of patients with cancer had experienced weight loss.
- 51% had nutritional impairment.
- 9% were overtly malnourished.

Look for these red flags of malnutrition:

- **Loss of Appetite**
- **Unintentional Weight Loss**
- **Loss of Muscle Mass**
- **Loss of Subcutaneous Fat**
- **Fluid Accumulation** (e.g., edema, ascites worsened by poor nutritional status)
- **Reduced Hand Grip Strength and Functionality**

A cancer diagnosis plus percentage of weight loss over time can lead to severe malnutrition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Weight Loss</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 7.5</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 10</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 20</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75% of patients with cancer had experienced weight loss.
Don’t forget to hang this on your unit!

Visit www.ons.org for related nutrition resources.


Supported by an independent educational grant from Nestlé Health Science. ONS is solely responsible for the criteria, objectives, content, quality, and scientific integrity of its programs and publications.