



# Cancer care: why nutrition matters

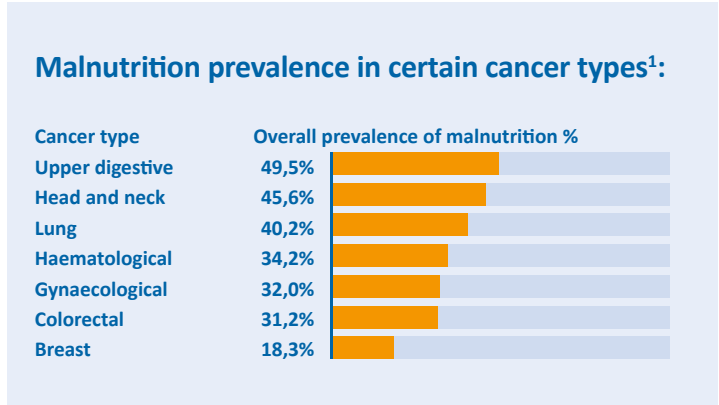
Malnutrition in cancer patients leads to poorer health outcomes. It also results in an increased burden to healthcare resources.

Nutritional care should be an integral part of cancer care.



**Cancer patients are at higher risk of malnutrition: 1 in 3 cancer patients are malnourished<sup>1</sup>**

**Malnutrition in cancer patients costs an estimated €17 billion/year in the EU<sup>2</sup>**



**What are the consequences of malnutrition for cancer patients?**

- Muscle loss
- Increased toxicity from chemotherapy
- Reduced tolerance to anticancer therapy
- Reduced independence and quality of life
- Higher complications and risk of infections
- Longer hospital stay greater than 3 days<sup>3</sup>
- Increased mortality

**Good nutritional care can deliver better health outcomes and save costs<sup>1</sup>**

- Weight gain or maintenance
- Decreased interruption rate of oncology therapy
- Improved response to anticancer therapy
- Nutritional interventions allow for cost savings to the healthcare systems

**MNI RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Screen and monitor cancer patients for malnutrition to provide timely nutritional care
- Implement clinical guidelines on nutritional care for cancer patients
- Provide equal access to and reimbursement of medical nutrition to cancer patients
- Implement multidisciplinary teams in oncology including a dietitian or nutritionist
- Educate healthcare professionals and patient advocates, and inform cancer patients on the importance of nutritional care

<sup>1</sup>Better care through better nutrition: value and effects of medical nutrition - A summary of the evidence base” [https://medicalnutritionindustry.com/files/user\\_upload/documents/medical\\_nutrition/2018\\_MNI\\_Dossier\\_Final\\_web.pdf](https://medicalnutritionindustry.com/files/user_upload/documents/medical_nutrition/2018_MNI_Dossier_Final_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>“The economic costs of disease related malnutrition” Freijer, Karen et al. (Clinical Nutrition, Volume 32, Issue 1, 136 – 141) [https://www.clinicalnutritionjournal.com/article/S0261-5614\(12\)00132-X/fulltext](https://www.clinicalnutritionjournal.com/article/S0261-5614(12)00132-X/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup>The economic cost of hospital malnutrition in Europe; a narrative review” Khalatbari-Soltani, Saman et al. (Clinical Nutrition ESPEN, Volume 10, Issue 3, e89 - e94) [https://clinicalnutrition.espen.com/article/S2405-4577\(15\)00097-2/pdf](https://clinicalnutrition.espen.com/article/S2405-4577(15)00097-2/pdf)