

Malnutrition

Is your patient at risk?

Malnutrition Screening Tool¹

1. Have you / the patient lost weight recently without trying?

No	0
Unsure	2
Yes, how much (kg)?	
1 - 5	1
6 - 10	2
11 - 15	3
> 15	4
Unsure	2

2. Have you / the patient been eating poorly because of a decreased appetite?

No	0
Yes	1

Total Score

Applies to the last 6 months

If unsure, ask if they suspect they have lost weight e.g. clothes are looser

For example, less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of usual intake

May also be eating poorly due to chewing and swallowing problems

Of weight loss and appetite questions

If your patients have lost weight and / or are eating poorly they may be at risk of malnutrition i.e. score 2 or more



Malnutrition occurs in approximately 30-35% of acute and 40-45% of residential patients in Queensland Health Institutions²

Action

1. **Refer** to Malnutrition Action Flowchart and / or refer to Dietitian for full assessment and intervention
2. **Document**
3. **Weigh** patients on admission and:
 - (a) weekly (acute)
 - (b) monthly (long-term care)
4. **Rescreen** patients:
 - (a) weekly (acute)
 - (b) monthly (long-term care)

Small weight losses weekly add up to significant weight loss and malnutrition

Note: Overweight / obese patients who have unexplained weight loss and illness can become protein depleted / malnourished too

© Developed by Merrilyn Banks, APD with assistance from Abbott



References: 1. Ferguson M, et al. *Nutrition* 1999;15:458-464. 2. Banks M, et al. Malnutrition and Pressure Ulcers in Queensland Hospitals. Proceedings of 22nd National DAA Conference, Melbourne 2004. Abbott Australasia Pty Ltd. ABN 95 000 180 389. Captain Cook Drive, Kurnell NSW 2231. Ph 1800 225 311. TM Trademark. The Health Agency NUT001:04/04.