

A Cross Sectional Study on Nutritional Care Given to In-Ward Medical and Surgical Patients in Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya

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Ensuring optimum nutritional conditions during an illness is of utmost importance to have a satisfactory patient outcome. Poor nutritional conditions are invariably associated with bad patient outcome resulting in poor wound healing, delayed physical recovery and other complications, finally leading to increased morbidity and mortality. Therefore, the aim of this study was to identify the discrepancies and deficiencies if any in the nutritional intake compared to the individual patient requirement during hospital stay of medical and surgical patients.

The study was carried out in medical, surgical and orthopedic wards in Teaching Hospital Peradeniya, from June to September 2011 and a consecutive sampling method was used. Data was obtained to calculate the calorie requirement using the Harris Benedict equation and protein requirement and both adjusted according to stress factor and sex and compared with what the patient received. Results were expressed as percentages and mean \pm (SD), depending on the variable type. Independent sample *t* test was performed to find out any significant difference between the recommended calorie and protein intake and the amount received.

Of 96 subjects 38.8% was dependant on the hospital meal service while 57.1% depended on home food. The average daily calorie amount received by male patients was 1214.78 kcal \pm 849.93 and for females was 1206.21 kcal \pm 519.77. The average daily protein amount received by males and females were 47.82 g \pm 36.49 and 49.58 g \pm 27.20 respectively. Sixty one percent of the study sample did not receive recommended nutritional needs. Further, the average daily calorie and protein amount received by patients was significantly lower than the respective recommended values.

In conclusion, a majority of the study sample did not receive recommended nutritional needs during hospital stay. Therefore, further improvement in adequacy and quality of food intake during hospital stay should be encouraged. Further studies are necessary to find out reasons for underfeeding during hospital stay.