

Literature review reveals prevalent malnutrition in hospital patients found in 11 Asian countries

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A significant association between poor nutrition status and an increased risk of clinical complications was also shown. Complications include infections, pressure ulcers, fractures, as well as pulmonary, renal and hepatic complications. Multiple studies found that malnutrition-related complications increased the length of hospital stay and the frequency of readmission. Moreover, malnutrition was linked to an increased risk of mortality. This is evident from 27 out of 28 studies evaluating the relationship between malnutrition and mortality in hospitalized patients.

The detrimental effect of poor nutrition status on patient outcomes might take its toll on the health economic system of Asian countries. Two of the reviewed studies investigated the economic consequences of malnutrition, both found a clear association between hospital malnutrition and increased hospitalization costs.

Medical experts of the review emphasize the need for further research aiming at optimizing nutritional screening and management to fight malnutrition and its clinical and economic consequences in Asia.

The review is based on a systematic search for articles on hospital malnutrition in Asia published between January 1997 and January 2018. Articles reporting data on the prevalence, clinical consequences, or economic costs of hospital malnutrition in an adult inpatient population with a sample size ≥ 30 were included in the analysis. Based on these criteria, the review analyzed a total of 92 studies with 62,280 patients in 11 Asian countries.