

New Nutrition Assessment and Body Composition Analysis for Cancer Patients Malnutrition Screening Package

.....• Impacts on Body Weight Changes to Cancer Patients

Involuntary weight loss or weight gain can both increase the risks of treatment side effects and all-cause mortality. Patients with cancer in the head and neck and along the gastrointestinal tract frequently experience weight loss after chemotherapy, whereas some patients with breast and prostate cancer tend to gain weight after hormonal therapy. *Maintenance of desirable body weight and prevention of muscle loss can be best achieved with early dietary intervention.*

.....• Special Diets after Cancer Treatments

Breast Cancer

More than 50% of patients undergoing chemotherapy experience treatment-related involuntary weight gain while some experience weight loss due to poor appetite. Both of these weight gain and loss may increase the risk of treatment side effects, such as increased risk of chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy and decreased survival rate respectively. Your diet is therefore extremely important. If you are gaining weight, a calorie-controlled diet with high protein is suggested to maintain your weight during chemotherapy. However, if you are losing weight, a high-protein, high-calorie diet is needed to stop further weight loss.

Prostate Cancer

Patients may experience diarrhoea after commencement of radiation therapy and change in body fat and muscle mass after hormonal therapy. If you suffer from diarrhoea, a diet low in fibre (limited intake of vegetable and fruit) yet adequate in calories and nutrients is needed to support you through the treatment. Hormonal therapy may cause body fat gain, muscle loss and bone loss. A calorie-controlled diet with high protein, calcium and vitamin D is thus recommended for attenuation and even prevention of related side effects. The suggested diet may also help reduce prostate cancer recurrence risk.

Gastrointestinal Cancers

Side effects such as poor appetite, indigestion, diarrhoea, constipation and nutrients malabsorption are very common among patients with gastrointestinal cancers, and close to 80% of patients experience significant weight loss (>5%) and malnutrition. Malnutrition can further compromise cancer treatment effects and worsen patients' quality of life, creating a vicious cycle. Therefore, an easy-to-digest, high-protein and high-calorie diet with guidance from a registered dietitian is recommended throughout the treatment.

New Dietetics Service for Cancer Patients during Treatment

With the Malnutrition Screening Package, our registered dietitians will assess the nutritional status of cancer patients based on the body weight, body composition, food intake and dietary habits. Evidence-based and achievable dietary advice will also be given to patients and their family members to guide them on the management of treatment side effects and ways to boost nutrition during treatment breaks.



The package includes:

- Body weight and composition assessment
- Recommendations by registered dietitians on cancer treatment diet (surgery/chemotherapy/radiation/hormonal treatment) with a specific emphasis on high-protein diet, neutropenic diet and use of oral nutritional supplements
- Eating tips targeting alleviation of treatment side effects

	Malnutrition Screening Package	First Diet Consultation	Follow-up Consultation
Duration	About 20 minutes	60 minutes	30 minutes
Body weight and Composition Assessment: height, weight, muscle mass, body fat percentage	✓	✓	✓
Nutrition Advice	✓	✓	✓
Personalised Meal Plan	✗	✓	✓
Charges Per Session	HK\$380	HK\$970	HK\$590

• Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I need a referral letter from doctor before consultation with the dietitian?

A referral letter may not be necessary if you are consulting HKSH doctors. However, if you are seeing other doctors, you are encouraged to have a referral letter from your doctor.

2. Can I join the Malnutrition Screening Package again?

Yes, you can join the Malnutrition Screening Package again because this package is designed for cancer patients who are interested to know more about their nutritional status and body composition BEFORE and DURING treatment. If you have lost more than 5% of body weight and are experiencing poor appetite, you should join the 1-hour diet consultation instead. Dietitian will provide you a suggested dietary plan (Please refer to First Diet Consultation in the above table).

3 How can I make appointment? Where is the service provided?

Dietetic service is available in both Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital in Happy Valley and HKSH Eastern Medical Centre in Shau Kei Wan from 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday, and from 9:00am to 1:00pm, Saturday. Please call 2835 8674 (Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital)/2917 1150 (HKSH Eastern Medical Centre) in advance for appointments.

4. If I am not available for consultation, can my family members attend on my behalf?

Yes. Your relatives and friends can attend the consultation on your behalf with your consent. They should be able to provide your latest height and weight record for assessment as you cannot undergo body composition analysis as scheduled. Also, telephone and zoom consultations are available when necessary.

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