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Factors associated with malnutrition in patients in home care.

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Background & Aim: To assess the nutritional status of patients in the home care program (HCP) and analyze associated factors.

Method: An observational, descriptive and transversal study. 455 patients over 65 years HCP three urban health centers, 212 were selected by stratified sampling doctor and place of residence. Nutritional status was determined by applying the questionnaire MNA (Mini Nutritional Assessment). sociodemographic, anthropometric, dependency, emotional and cognitive status, and laboratory parameters: In addition 57 variables were collected. A descriptive analysis of the main variables was performed. associations were analyzed by applying chi square analysis of variance. Levels are considered significant for $p < 0.05$.

Results: 80.7% were women and the mean age was 83.9 (SD = 7.4). 65% lived at home and 34.9% in a residence. 40.1% were at risk of malnutrition and 21.2% malnutrition. It has been associated with poorer nutritional status older ($p = 0.03$) and live in a residence ($p = 0.04$). Also with lower values: the weight ($P = 0.03$), body mass index ($P = 0.002$), arm circumference ($p = 0.0001$) and calf ($p = 0.0001$) and with parameters low analytical: hemoglobin ($p = 0.01$), albumin ($p = 0.0001$) and iron ($P < 0.05$). Most functional dependence ($P = 0.0001$) and cognitive impairment ($P = 0.0001$), are also associated with poorer nutritional status.

Conclusions: There is a high prevalence of malnutrition (more than half of patients in the HCP are malnourished or at risk of it). It is recommended that a nutritional systematically evaluating these patients, especially those more dependent and cognitively impaired patients, since there are some parameters that can be corrected.