

Nutritional Screening

Nutritional screening is a quick, simple and validated process to identify individuals at risk of [malnutrition](#) or who are already malnourished. It is the first step in the nutritional care pathway and determines whether further nutritional assessment is needed.

Key Characteristics

- Quick and easy to perform
- Can be completed by non-specialist staff (e.g., nurses)
- Uses standardized tools
- Facilitates early intervention and improves outcomes

Common Screening Tools

- **MUST** (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool): for general adult population
- **NRS-2002** (Nutritional Risk Screening): for hospitalized patients
- **MNA** (Mini Nutritional Assessment): specific for older adults
- **SGA** (Subjective Global Assessment): hybrid between screening and assessment

Typical Screening Parameters

- **BMI** (Body Mass Index)
- **Recent weight loss** (amount and time frame)
- **Reduced dietary intake**
- **Impact of acute or chronic illness**
- **Appetite or functional decline**

Clinical Importance

Nutritional screening is essential in multiple settings:

- In [hospitals](#): reduces complications, infections, and length of stay
- In [primary care](#): identifies at-risk elderly or chronically ill patients
- In [surgical care](#): optimizes preoperative and postoperative recovery

If Risk is Identified

- Refer for **comprehensive nutritional assessment**
- Initiate **nutritional intervention** (oral supplements, enteral or parenteral support)
- Ensure **monitoring and follow-up**

Related Links

- [nutritional_assessment](#)
- [malnutrition](#)
- [clinical_nutrition](#)

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