

**Titel:** Nutritional support in pancreatic cancer patients and its effect on nutritional status: an observational regional HPB network study investigating current practice.

**Prehabilitatie bij:** Patiënten met pancreascarcinoom vooraf aan operatie.

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Preoperative malnutrition is associated with poor postoperative outcomes in patients with pancreatic cancer. This study evaluated the effectiveness of current practice in nutritional support for patients with pancreatic cancer.

**Methods:** Observational multicenter HPB network study conducted at the Isala Clinics Zwolle, Medical Spectrum Twente, Medical Center Leeuwarden, and University Medical Center Groningen between October 2021 and May 2023. Patients with a suspected pancreatic malignancy scheduled for surgery were screened for malnutrition using the Patient-Generated Subjective Global Assessment (PG-SGA) questionnaire and referred to a dedicated dietician for nutritional support comprising pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy, dietary advice, and nutritional supplements to achieve adequate caloric and protein intake. At baseline, 1 day preoperatively, and 3 months postoperatively, the nutritional status and muscle thickness were evaluated.

**Results:** The study included 30 patients, of whom 12 (40%) classified as malnourished (PG-SGA  $\geq 4$ ) at baseline. Compared to well-nourished patients, malnourished patients were younger, were predominantly female, and had a higher body mass index, despite having lost more body weight in the past 6 months. All malnourished patients and 78% of the well-nourished patients received nutritional support. Consequently, a preoperative increase in caloric and protein intake and body weight were observed. Postoperatively, despite a further increase in caloric intake, a considerable decrease in protein intake, body weight, and muscle thickness was observed.

**Conclusion:** Malnutrition is prevalent in patients undergoing pancreatic surgery. Nutritional support by a dedicated dietician is effective in enhancing patients' preoperative nutritional status. However, postoperative monitoring of adequate nutritional intake in patients could be improved.