
Preface

There is a very close and multidimensional interplay between nutritional status and neurologic diseases. On one hand, nutritional problems can predispose to certain neurologic disorders. On the other hand, both acute and chronic neurological disorders have a significant impact on body metabolism. In addition, these patients comprise a high-risk group who can rapidly develop malnutrition secondary to their disabilities related to manifestations of the underlying disease, like swallowing problems or mobility issues. Malnutrition, unless prevented or efficiently treated, is a well-known factor that contributes to increased morbidity and mortality in patients with neurologic diseases. Despite its importance and high prevalence, neurologists are generally not motivated in implementing nutritional plans to their patients. One contributing factor in this regard is the scarcity of publications that primarily focus on the issue of nutritional management of neurological patients.

In this publication, we aim to cover practical aspects of nutrition from a neurology perspective. The book starts with a concise review of macronutrient metabolism in the human body and familiarizes the reader on how this highly critical body function is disturbed in disease settings. The section is followed by a detailed summary of commonly used screening and assessment tools in identifying patients with malnutrition, where the normal physiology has been exhausted by impaired food and calorie supply. Epidemiologic facts on nutritional issues in neurological disorders and their impact on the disease course, discussed in the ensuing chapter, highlight the importance why nutritional evaluation and planning should be inherent tasks of neurologists. The part on methods of clinical nutrition presents basic knowledge on the principles of how these plans should be implemented. Specific chapters dedicated to nutritional support in neuro-intensive care unit patients and patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and chronic neurodegenerative diseases provide a handy guide for nutritional management of neurologic patients encountered in various clinical settings. The concept of dysphagia, a critical and highly prevalent contributor of disease-related malnutrition among neurology patients, is discussed extensively from a multitude of aspects including its pathophysiology, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. Our work is finalized by a chapter on the newly developing and provoking concept of neuro-nutrition—the use of certain nutrients for the treatment of neurologic disorders—an area where the scientific community has kept its distance for a long time but could not avoid anymore due to the immense pressure from the lay media and general public.

We believe that this work would be an important resource for filling the gap in the field and would prove to be useful not only for practicing neurologists but also for medical personnel from other fields like clinical nutrition, critical care, or geriatric medicine. We hope that the book will meet the expectations of our valuable readers.

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