

Press release

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European Week Against Cancer: 1 in 3 cancer patients are malnourished and need nutritional care

29 May 2020, Brussels – On the occasion of the European Week Against Cancer, Specialised Nutrition Europe (SNE) highlights the fact **that 1 in 3 cancer patients are malnourished** and calls to integrate screening for malnutrition and nutritional care in the cancer treatment pathway.

Malnutrition in cancer patients leads to muscle loss, organ damage, immune system dysfunction, diminished tolerability of chemotherapy and increased mortality.

Despite efficient screening tools, cancer-related malnutrition often remains underdiagnosed or diagnosed too late. SNE calls for screening of cancer patients once the cancer diagnosis is established.

Timely nutritional interventions - early on during cancer treatment - can help patients better cope with treatment, improve quality of life and lead to better health outcomes by improving muscle mass, and tolerance of anti-cancer therapies (as also indicated in a recent [WHO report](#)).

On the European Week Against Cancer, SNE calls on the EU institutions to adopt concrete measures in the Europe Beating Cancer Plan to address the nutritional needs of cancer patients:

- **Screening and monitoring all cancer patients for malnutrition in a timely manner**
- **Implementing clinical guidelines on nutritional care in cancer treatment across Europe**
- **Establishing multidisciplinary care teams which include a dietitian or a qualified nutritionist**
- **Providing equal access to, and reimbursement of, medical nutrition**
- **Educating healthcare professionals and patient advocates on malnutrition.**

SNE contributed to the [public consultation](#) on the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and invites further exchange on medical nutrition and cancer with the EU authorities, decision-makers of EU Member States, and other relevant stakeholders, as consultation continues in 2020.

For more information:

- [SNE and MNI call for nutritional care to be an integral part of cancer care](#)

ABOUT

Specialised Nutrition Europe (SNE) is the voice of the specialised nutrition industry across Europe. SNE members are the national associations of 19 European countries including a majority of EU states and their members are the companies producing tailor made dietary solutions for populations with very specific nutritional needs. These include: infants and young children, patients under medical supervision, sportspeople, overweight and obese consumers, and those suffering from coeliac disease. More information at: www.specialisednutritioneurope.eu – E-mail: s@specialisednutritioneurope.eu