

NOVEMBER 9-13, 2026

MALNUTRITION AWARENESS WEEK



Working **together** against disease-related malnutrition



ESPEN
The European Society for
Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism

#ESPENMAW26

www.espen.org/activities/malnutrition-awareness-week

ESPEN Malnutrition Awareness Week

Working together against Disease-Related Malnutrition

The ESPEN Malnutrition Awareness Week (**MAW**) is an annual **international campaign** dedicated to **raising global awareness about disease-related malnutrition** (DRM), and its profound impact on patient's wellbeing and public health.

From **9-13th of November**, we unite communities worldwide to **raise awareness** about DRM, **educate** healthcare professionals from all disciplines to enhance early detection, intervention, and comprehensive care for individuals affected by DRM, **monitor quality of nutritional care** in healthcare institutions, and **advocate** for transformative action against this global health challenge.

All info and activities at www.espen.org/activities/malnutrition-awareness-week

ESPEN MAW Calendar 2026



SAVE THE DATES FOR ESPEN MAW 2026



NOV 09

Nutrition in diabetes

Webinar
ESPEN-DNSG

"Nutrition is key in diabetes"



3 pm CET
FREE REGISTRATION



NOV 10

Nutrition and obesity

Webinar
ESPEN-EASO

"Nutritional risks of anti-obesity medicines"



3 pm CET
FREE REGISTRATION



NOV 11

Nutrition in ICU

Webinar
ESPEN-ESICM

"Optimizing nutritional support in critically ill patients"



3 pm CET
FREE REGISTRATION



NOV 12

nutritionDay worldwide

Benchmark your nutritional care with international audit in Hospital, Oncology, Primary Care, ICU and Nursing Homes



www.nutritionDay.org



NOV 13

ICD-11 Undernutrition

Webinar
ESPEN-EHNA

In-depth overview of the new ICD-11 code Undernutrition active from 2027.

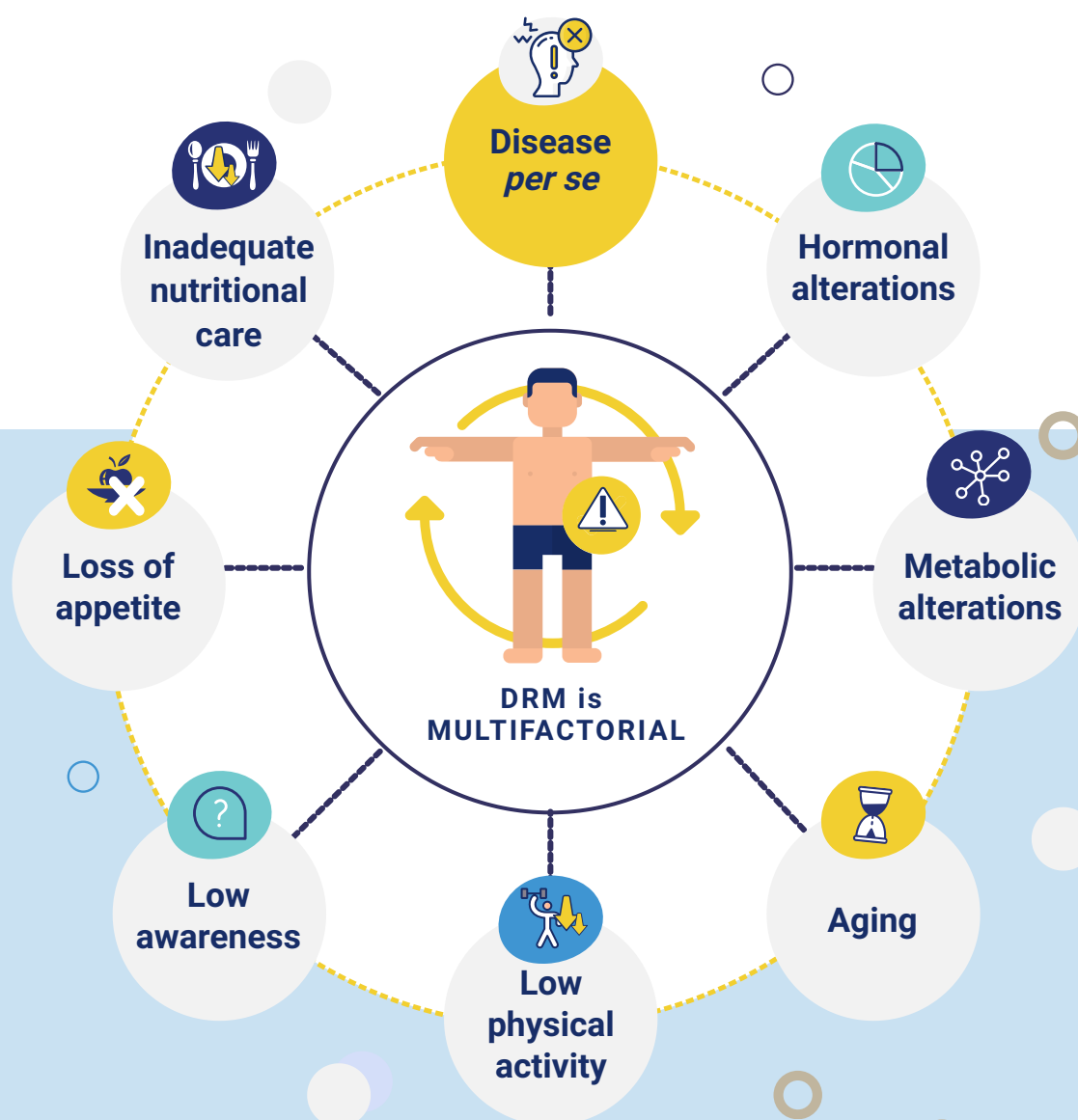


3 pm CET
FREE REGISTRATION

All info at www.espen.org/activities/malnutrition-awareness-week

Understanding Malnutrition

Disease-related malnutrition (DRM), a prevalent and often overlooked issue, occurs when individuals suffer from **inadequate nutrition due to underlying health conditions**. Whether it is chronic diseases, infections, or acute illnesses, **malnutrition worsens outcomes and hampers recovery**.



From ESPEN fact sheet on DRM



Prevalence of malnutrition

in HOSPITAL



20-50% of patients, varying depending on the medical specialty



37%

Older Adults



35%

Oncology



29%

Cardiac diseases



28%

Respiratory diseases



27%

Gastro-enterology



27%

Internal medicine

up to

24%

of the patients at hospital admission are found at risk for malnutrition.

9,6%

of patients with good nutritional status on admission get malnourished during hospitalization

in PRIMARY CARE



2-14%

Frequent in patients with **chronic diseases, socioeconomic challenges, food insecurity, and the elderly**, necessitating proactive screening and intervention strategies

in NURSING HOMES

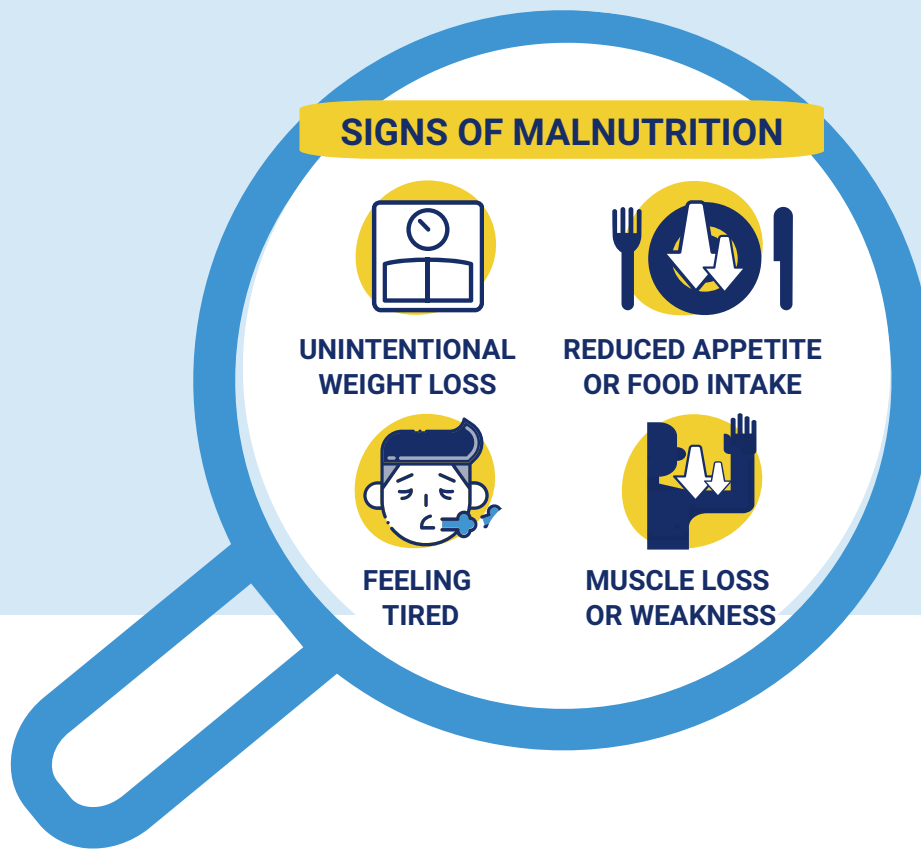


up to

60%

Contributing factors include **reduced appetite, difficulties with chewing and swallowing, multiple chronic conditions, dementia** and social factors such as isolation and **depression**.

Addressing malnutrition across these settings requires **early screening and diagnoses**, as well as early identification, **routine nutritional assessments**, and **tailored interventions** to improve patient outcomes and enhance overall quality of life. There is an urgent need for comprehensive education on DRM across all healthcare disciplines, promoting early recognition and swift implementation of nutritional care protocols and guidelines



Signs of malnutrition in patients

Patients experiencing signs of malnutrition, such as unintended **weight loss, fatigue, changes in appetite, muscle weakness or loss, hair thinning or loss, reduced immune function and increased susceptibility to infections, delayed wound healing, poor concentration and cognitive function**, should communicate these concerns openly to their doctor.

Emphasizing specific symptoms and their impact on daily life is crucial for effective diagnosis and treatment. Accessing nutritional care involves **discussing these symptoms during medical appointments**, seeking a referral to a registered dietitian or nutritionist, and collaborating with healthcare providers to tailor dietary adjustments and supplements to individual needs. Recognizing these signs of malnutrition enables timely intervention to improve overall health outcomes and quality of life.

Consequences of DRM

Disease-related malnutrition (DRM) imposes significant consequences both on patients and the healthcare system. **For patients, DRM can lead to compromised immune function, delayed wound healing, muscle wasting, increased risk of infections and complications during hospital stays, disabilities and increased risk of mortality.** Long-term effects may include **impaired physical and cognitive function, reduced quality of life, and prolonged recovery times**, which escalate **treatment needs** and **strain healthcare resources**.

These outcomes not only impact patient well-being but also **increase hospital readmission rates and prolong hospital stays**.



INFECTIONS AND
COMORBIDITIES



WOUND
HEALING



TREATMENT
NEEDS



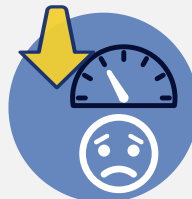
LENGTH OF
HOSPITAL STAY



COSTS



IMPAIRED
RECOVERY



QUALITY
OF LIFE



MORTALITY



From ESPEN fact sheet on DRM

Nutritional care is a human right

"All people should have access to food and evidence-based medical nutrition therapy"

The Vienna Declaration, 2022

The Human rights based approach (HRBA) in clinical nutrition is a strategies to **raise awareness of the need for universal access to nutritional care.**

It's the foundation of political and legal instruments in this field.

We advocate

that all patients have the right to benefit from the whole process of nutritional care:

- **The right to timely nutritional screening**
- **The right to DRM* diagnosis**
- **The right to nutritional assessment**
- **The right to appropriate evidence-based nutritional therapy**
- **The right to regular monitoring**
- **The right for therapy to be managed by an interdisciplinary team**

We are NOT advocating for:

- **The right to be free from malnutrition**
- **The obligation to feed all patients at any stage of life and at any cost**

HRBA implies that ethically, the best decision for the patient must be taken.

This may include, under certain circumstances, the decision not to feed



World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. (2023). Disease-related malnutrition: a time for action. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/375033>. Cardenas D, Correia M, Ochoa JB, Hardy G, Rodríguez-Ventimilla D, Bermúdez CE, et al. Clinical nutrition and human rights. An international position paper. Clin Nutr. 2021;40(6):4029-36.

From ESPEN fact sheet on Vienna's declaration



Bridging the Gap: The Urgent Need for Improved Nutritional Awareness and Care

actions and initiatives promoted during the Malnutrition Awareness week



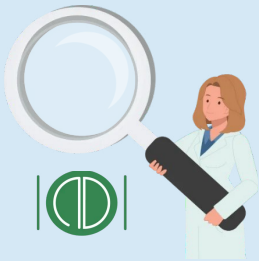
more awareness about DRM and its consequences



more networking among all medical specialties



early screening and diagnosis of malnutrition with GLIM criteria



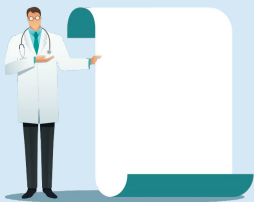
more research about DRM and therapeutic interventions



more education among all HCPs from all disciplines



patients empowerment



more knowledge about the burden of malnutrition on the healthcare system/costs



recognition of nutritional care as a human right



equal access to nutritional care in Europe and worldwide

MAW educational events

Join MAW educational events and informative webinars, designed to **explore the complexities of DRM at multiple levels**. During this week, we will involve **clinical nutrition experts, patients and policy makers** to share experiences, evidence-based insights, best practices, and latest research on DRM and its management.



Webinars on Nutrition and Diseases

During this year MAW, ESPEN will present **three joint webinars** in collaboration with three **leading European Scientific Societies**:

- **ESPEN-DNSG/EASD** (The Diabetes and Nutrition Study Group / The European Association for the Study of Diabetes) - nutrition in diabetes
- **ESPEN-EASO** (The European Association for the Study of Obesity) - nutrition in obesity (GLP-1 treatments)
- **ESPEN-ESICM** (The European Society of Intensive Care Medicine) - nutrition in the ICU



nutritionDay: the global benchmarking audit on nutritional care

nutritionDay stands as the definitive centerpiece of ESPEN MAW on NOV 12th, it represents ESPEN's strong commitment to promoting data-driven research and clinical excellence. Join the international audit on NOV 12 (www.nutritionDay.org)



Insights on the implementation of ICD-11 "*undernutrition*" code

During MAW, a dedicated session will provide key insights into the **implementation** of the **new ICD-11 "undernutrition" code**, highlighting practical challenges and opportunities for improving diagnosis, documentation, and patient care. Organized **in collaboration with EHNA** (The European Nutrition for Health Alliance), it brings together experts to share perspectives and support implementation across clinical settings.



MAW Social Media Campaign

Share your MAW

Harness the power of social media by participating in our **#ESPENMAW26** campaign. Share stories of your MAW in your country or institution, highlight successful interventions, and raise awareness of the importance of proper attentioning nutrition in the healing process.

Spread the Word and educate about DRM

ESPEN has prepared **webinars, fact sheets, video interviews with experts in nutrition, social posts** ready to be shared on your preferred social media platform. Help us spread the message of the Malnutrition Awareness Week by sharing this material on malnutrition with your network. Your involvement matters, whether you're a healthcare professional, a patient, policymaker, community advocate, or concerned individual. Every action counts, and **together, we can advocate for a better nutritional care for every patient.**

Visit ESPEN website to explore the **full schedule of MAW events** and find out how to actively participate in the Malnutrition Awareness Week. By fostering awareness and promoting best practices, **MAW strives to empower communities** to combat malnutrition and work towards healthier communities.

Together, we can build healthier future for our patients and for our communities working **together** against disease-related malnutrition.

Worldwide Participation

All national PEN Societies that are part of ESPEN are invited to join Malnutrition Awareness Week (MAW). Each country organizes educational activities throughout the week to promote the campaign at all levels—from healthcare professionals to policymakers and the general public. Building on the strong success of previous ESPEN MAW campaigns, which achieved broad international engagement and visibility, the initiative continues to expand its worldwide reach, fostering collaboration and raising awareness on a global scale.



An ESPEN commitment

Words from the ESPEN Executive Committee

After the success of last years MAW, we want to **reinforce our commitment** in generating, during this week, **more awareness** on disease related malnutrition (DRM) at all levels.

To this aim, we are committed to work closely with each interested PEN Society, and **enhance collaboration across the ESPEN community** to ensure more equitable and earlier access for all patients to optimal nutritional care.

Our intent is to create an **international network** to **raise attention of politicians** and **media** about the burden of malnutrition in disease and the urgent need to act now.

On this regard a **MAW media press kit** is made available for everyone to directly inform local media and politicians on the purpose of this international campaign and on the heavy burden of malnutrition.

All info at www.espen.org/activities/malnutrition-awareness-week





ESPEN

*The European Society for Clinical Nutrition
and Metabolism*