**Malnutrition and Parkinson’s Disease**

**Introduction**

Malnutrition is a condition that results from inadequate protein, calories, and other nutrients that are needed for maintenance and repair of body tissues. The frequency of protein undernutrition among people with Parkinson’s disease (PWP) is 0-2% and 20-34% are at risk according to the Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) (Sheard, Ash, Mellick, Silburn, & Kerr, 2013).  Parkinson’s disease increases the risk of malnutrition. The study aims at estimating the extent of malnutrition in a community of people living with Parkinson’s disease.  Understanding of the connection between health conditions and malnutrition can inform nutrition screening frequency to avoid putting patients at risk. Corrective measures can be taken if malnutrition is discovered on time regardless of the one’s health condition. A systematic review of malnutrition prevalence in Parkinson’s disease recommends the malnutrition screening during the diagnosis of Parkinson’s disease (Sheard, Ash, Silburn, & Kerr, 2011).

**Article Search**

**Current Credible source:** Sheard, J. M., Ash, S., Mellick, G. D., Silburn, P. A., & Kerr, G. K. (2013). Malnutrition in a Sample of Community-Dwelling People with Parkinson’s Disease. PLoS One, 8(1)

**Database Search Terms**: malnutrition and Parkinson’s disease, mental health and malnutrition, malnutrition and specific health conditions, risk of malnutrition.

The result from each search term to identify the studies that focus on the connection between malnutrition and specific health outcomes.

**Number of articles:** 2

**Source Outside ATI Module:** Sheard, J. M., Ash, S., Silburn, P. A., & Kerr, G. K. (2011). Prevalence of malnutrition in Parkinson's disease: a systematic review. Nutrition Reviews, 69(9), 520-532.

**Article Findings**

**Relevance to Topic:** The selected articles focus on the connection between malnutrition and Parkinson’s disease. The under diagnosis of malnutrition among people with Parkinson’s disease is a significant problem.  The selected articles address the topic by conducting a systematic review of past studies and estimating the extent of malnutrition among a community of people with Parkinson’s disease.

**Type of Research:** A cross sectional study of people suffering from Parkinson’s disease was conducted in Brisbane, Australia.  Subjective Global Assessment (SGA) and Patient Generated Subjective Global Assessment (PG – SGA) were the tools used to screen nutritional status.

**Findings:** Malnutrition is under recognized and under diagnosed among people living with Parkinson’s disease.  Health professionals in contact with Parkinson’s disease patients should conduct frequent nutritional status screening. It will help in providing help to those who might be suffering from malnutrition.

**Evidence for Practice**

**Evidence Summary:** Nineteen of the study participants were found to be moderately malnourished. Constipation, loss of appetite, swallowing problems and early satiety negatively affect food intake.

**Improve Practice:** The results of the study can be used to justify the recommendation that all health professional should constantly screen Parkinson’s disease patients for malnutrition. Lives can be saved and the cost of healthcare brought down if measures are taken early. The gap to practice is bridged when the study recommendations are put to practice.

**Weaknesses:** There are no notable weaknesses that can skew the results of the study.

**Sharing of Evidence**

The information can be shared with healthcare providers to inform all healthcare professionals about connection between malnutrition and Parkinson’s disease. The study can be available online as a free access article.  The cost of getting published in a notable database, which allows healthcare professionals and providers to access the study is the key cost.  It is important to share this with the nursing profession because nurses are in direct contact with Parkinson’s disease patients, which makes them the best people to screen for malnutrition and check for symptoms.

**Conclusion**

Malnutrition is the under nutrition of protein and other nutrients required to repair body tissues. Parkinson’s disease increases the risk of malnutrition. Frequent nutritional status screening is recommended for Parkinson’s disease patients.

**References**

Sheard, J. M., Ash, S., Mellick, G. D., Silburn, P. A., & Kerr, G. K. (2013). Malnutrition in a Sample of Community-Dwelling People with Parkinson’s Disease. *PLoS One, 8*(1).

Sheard, J. M., Ash, S., Silburn, P. A., & Kerr, G. K. (2011). Prevalence of malnutrition in Parkinson's disease: a systematic review. *Nutrition Reviews, 69*(9), 520-532.