

MALNUTRITION: A Quick Reference Tool

	Mild Malnutrition Cachexia	Moderate Malnutrition	Severe Malnutrition Emaciation d/t Malnutrition
Weight	85-95% normal body wt	75-85% normal body wt	< 75% normal body wt
BMI	18 - 18.9	16 - 17.9	< 16
Serum Albumin (g/dL)	3.1 - 3.4	2.4 - 3.0	< 2.4
Total Lymphocyte Count (per mm ³)	1501 - 1999	800 - 1500	< 800
Serum Transferrin (mg/dL)	201 - 219	150 - 200	< 150
Other Clinical Features	Triceps skin fold <3mm	Triceps skin fold <3mm	Skin breakdown, poor wound healing, infections

Please avoid the diagnosis PROTEIN MALNUTRITION – this codes to Kwashiorkor. Coding guidelines prohibit coding of “protein malnutrition” since it is usually seen in some under-developed areas in Africa & Central America and is extremely rare in the US. If you feel that your patient has PROTEIN MALNUTRITION, please document Kwashiorkor.

REFERENCES:

Heimbürger DC. Chapter 75. Malnutrition and Nutritional Assessment. In: Longo DL, Fauci AS, Kasper DL, Hauser SL, Jameson JL, Loscalzo J, eds. Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine. 18th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill; 2012. <http://www.accessmedicine.com/content>. Accessed April 23, 2012.

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