 SECTION 2
Nutritional Status Assessment

Nutritional Status Assessment

Nutritional status assessment (NSA) is the foundation for the provision of optimal nutritional care to patients of all ages. An NSA for the elderly should include four components: (1) Diet History and Evaluation, Including Socioeconomic and Functional Status, (2) Anthropometric Measurements, (3) Biochemical Evaluation, and (4) Nutrition Physical Examination (see Table 2.1). These four components, with the clinician’s expertise, provide direction for the development of the nutritional care plan. However, in geriatric nutrition many accepted procedures for determining nutritional assessment are affected by the aging process (see Table 1.1), thereby increasing the difficulty of assessing nutritional status.

Nutritional assessment data need to be updated and evaluated regularly to successfully monitor individuals at increased nutritional risk, such as the frail elderly.
| Table 2.1 |
| Key Components of Nutritional Status Assessment in the Elderly |

### Diet History and Evaluation Including Socioeconomic and Functional Status

- 24-hour recall, usual eating, food frequency patterns
- Food allergies, preferences, intolerances
- Weight history, medication regimens, socioeconomic status (i.e., living environment, social support systems, etc.)
- Functional status of nutritionally related activities of daily life and instrumental activities of daily living, such as food shopping, cooking, eating, etc.

### Anthropometric Measurements

- Height
- Weight
- Body mass index
- Waist: hip ratio
- Skinfold measurements (mid-arm circumference, triceps skinfolds)
- Changes in anthropometric measurements over time

### Biochemical Evaluation

- Electrolytes, indicators of fluid status
- Micronutrient levels
- Substrate (protein, carbohydrate, or fat) intolerance
- Visceral protein stores

### Nutrition Physical Examination

- Hair, skin, nails, eyes
- Oral/dental (lips, tongue, gums, mucous membranes, chewing and swallowing ability)
- Overall musculature, adipose stores
- Measurements of functional status (i.e., hand grip strength)