Nutritional Profile of Hospitalized Pediatric Oncology Patients.

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BACKGROUND:The protein-energy malnutrition (PEM) is frequently observed in children with high-grade malignant cancer. The etiology of malnutrition in cancer patients include reducing food intake, as well as changes in energy expenditure and in the absorption and metabolism of nutrients, as well as other complications such as oral and gastrointestinal toxicity, nephrotoxicity and infections. Nutritional assessment is a systematic process, being the first step of nutritional assistance, aiming to obtain appropriate information in order to identify problems related to nutrition, reason why is considered critical to pediatric oncology patients.

HYPOTHESIS: To determine the nutritional status of hospitalized pediatric oncology patients.

METHODS: We conducted a retrospective, observational and descriptive study in pediatric oncology patients hospitalized at AC Camargo Cancer Center from January 2012 to December 2013. Nutritional status was estabilished through weight, height,index of body mass, arm circumference, triceps skinfold and arm muscle circumference measurements.

RESULTS: We analyzed 93 charts. The most frequent type of cancer in children was leukemia (17.2%) and relating it to nutrition status, the most of them were eutrophic (56.3%). It was also observed that patients treated by Health Unic System (HUS) had higher malnutrition rate. Overall, the in most common cancers found in the study the most evident nutritional status was eutrophic, except in patients with Hodgkin's lymphoma, in which most cases were considered malnourished. Conclusion: Studies that monitor the nutritional status of children with cancer can prevent complications and improve the prognosis among the affected.