

## Malnutrition as a Social Determinant of Health

Social determinants of health--including access to nutritious food--affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes particularly among vulnerable populations like older adults and minority communities. Malnutrition is lack of adequate protein, calories, and other nutrients and has been associated with poor health outcomes, frailty and disability, and increased healthcare costs.

This year NLGA passed a new [Resolution in Support of Addressing Older Adult Malnutrition as Part of Quality Healthcare](#).

Malnourished patients have

- 2 times higher hospital costs
- 2 times longer hospital stays
- 1.6 times more likelihood to be readmitted to the hospital.

Black hospitalized patients have a 14% higher rate of malnutrition than white patients and the rate of malnutrition is highest with older adults.

These facts and more lead the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) to launch [Malnutrition Awareness Week™](#), scheduled for October 5-9, 2020. One goal of Malnutrition Awareness Week is to educate consumers and patients on the importance of discussing their nutritional status with healthcare professionals.

To help spread the word, more information (including social media resources) is available [here](#). Abbott is a sponsor of Malnutrition Awareness Week™.

