

Haematogram and serum iron status of malnourished Nigerian children.

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Abstract

Haematological parameters, total serum iron, and total iron binding capacity (TIBC) concentrations were estimated in twenty protein energy malnourished (PEM) children, five kwashiorkor (K), five marasmus (M), five marasmic-kwashiorkor (M-K), and five undernourished (U) aged between one and five years on admission and after 18 days hospitalisation at Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital Complex. The Hospital diet for K and M-K consisted of 8% protein and 802 calories per litre while that for M and U consisted of 30% protein and 1350 calories per litre. After the period of 18 days of rehabilitation there was no significant ($p > 0.05$) difference (Student's t-test) in the weight for age. None of the haematological parameters was significantly different after rehabilitation for all the four types of PEM. Of the four types only Kwashiorkor with mean serum iron values of 15.6 ± 1.51 micrograms/100 ml and 21.17 ± 0.33 micrograms/100 ml on admission and after rehabilitation respectively was significantly ($P < 0.05$) different. More attention by the OAUTHC authorities needs to be paid to the management, feeding and diet given to these children so that there will be a greater and more rapid improvement in their rehabilitation.

Keywords: Haematogram, Serum iron status, Malnourished Nigerian children

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