

## **Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) predicts functional decline of elderly Taiwanese--result of a national cohort sample**

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Nutrition is a key element in geriatric health and is important for maintaining functional ability. We analyzed the dataset of the “Survey of Health and Living Status of the Elderly in Taiwan”, a population-based study conducted by the Bureau of Health Promotion of Taiwan, to examine the functional status-predictive ability of the Mini-Nutritional Assessment (MNA). We rated 2890  $\geq 65$  year-old participants with the long-form and short-form of the MNA and with the Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and the Instrument Activities of Daily Living (IADL) scales at baseline (1999) and four years later (2003). We analyzed the association of the rated nutritional status with ADL and IADL status with Logistic regression analysis. Results showed that elderly who were rated malnourished or at risk of malnutrition at baseline generally had significantly worse ADL and IADL status four years later. Poor nutritional status at baseline also predicted greater risk of ADL and IADL dependency. These associations exist even among elderly who were free of ADL and IADL dependency at baseline. Results clearly indicate that the MNA is able to predict ADL and IADL dependency (in addition to rating current nutritional status) of the elderly. The MNA, especially the short-form, should be a valuable tool for identifying elderly at risk of functional decline and/or malnutrition in clinical practice or community health promotion.

**Key words:** Mini Nutritional Assessment; Physical functional status; Nutritional status; Elderly; Taiwan