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The Cancer Patients' Bill of Rights
for appropriate and prompt nutritional support

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- **What is it?**
 - A document stating the rights and needs of cancer patients related to nutrition
 - Aims at raising awareness on nutritional care in cancer
- **Who wrote it?**
 - A group of *Italian patients, medical professionals and researchers*
 - Riccardo Caccialanza, Francesco De Lorenzo, Luca Gianotti, Vittorina Zagonel, Cecilia Gavazzi, Gabriella Farina, Paolo Cotogni, Saverio Cinieri, Emanuele Cereda, Paolo Marchetti, Mariateresa Nardi, Elisabetta Iannelli, Claudia Santangelo, Francesca Tracò, Carmine Pinto and Paolo Pedrazzoli
- **What's next?**
 - Submitted to the Italian Ministry of Health.
 - **ECPC AGM to approve the English version to give Europe its own chart**

1 – Right to correct information and nutritional counseling

“Every cancer patient has the right to **comprehensive evidence-based clinical information** on her/his nutritional status, possible associated **consequences** and available **nutritional therapeutic options**; nutritional **counseling** to **adapt** her/his diet to suit ensuing medical, surgical or radiotherapeutic treatment.”

2 – Right to nutritional screening and assessment

“Every cancer patient has the right to **nutritional screening** to reduce the risk of malnutrition, using validated tools, both at diagnosis and at regular time points, while ensuring that the cancer type and stage are taken into account along with any treatment likely to affect nutritional status. Every cancer patient at nutritional risk, has the right to **prompt referral for comprehensive nutritional assessment** and support to Clinical Nutrition Services or to medical personnel with documented skills in clinical nutrition. Nutritional assessment must be an integral part of any diagnostic-therapeutic regimes developed by Oncology Units.

3 – Right to dietary prescriptions

“Every cancer patients at nutritional risk or malnutrition has the right to **receive personalized dietary prescriptions** by medical personnel with documented skills in clinical nutrition.”

4 – Right to oral nutritional supplements

“Every cancer patient at nutritional risk has the right, according to clinical conditions and specific nutrient deficiencies, to **receive oral nutritional supplements, including vitamins and minerals.**”

5 – Right to appropriate and prompt artificial nutrition

“Artificial nutrition is a complex therapeutic procedure that requires specific medical skills, as it may be associated with severe complications if not carried out according to evidence-based standard operating protocols. Every cancer patient at nutritional risk, who is unable maintain an adequate nutritional status despite nutritional counseling and oral nutritional support, has the right to **receive appropriate and swift artificial nutrition in every health care setting, as part of continuing care.**”

6 – Right to appropriate and safe home artificial nutrition

“Every cancer patient, who needs to continue artificial nutrition after hospital discharge, has the right to receive **appropriate and safe home artificial nutrition**, prescribed by Clinical Nutrition Services or medical personnel with documented skills in clinical nutrition.”

7- Right to nutritional support monitoring

“Every cancer patient requiring nutritional support has the right to **periodic reassessment of treatment adequacy** and efficacy using established integrated health care regimes which ensure the collaboration of both Oncologists and Clinical Nutritionists.”

8- Right to treatment for overweight-related health problems during or after cancer treatment

“Every cancer patient has the right to be referred to Clinical Nutrition Services, during or after oncologic rehabilitation programs, so that **ideal body weight can be recovered or maintained**, to avoid the negative impact of increased weight on prognosis and the clinical course of many cancer types.”

9- Right to psychological support

“Malnutrition and overweight considerably affect body image and can cause problems within families. Any patient likely to experience such problems has the right to receive appropriate and swift psychological support.”

10- Right to participate in clinical nutrition trials

“Every cancer patient has the right to be enrolled in clinical studies on nutritional support at different stages of the disease.”

Thank for your attention

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European Cancer Patient Coalition



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