

WEIGHT GAIN

Source : Dr. J. Potter & Dr. M. Roberts, Victoria Infirmary

Many old people who are admitted to hospital for routine reasons (e.g. a fall) are found to be under-nourished on admission. During their stay in hospital, old people generally lose weight. A study was recently carried out to investigate the effectiveness of giving elderly hospital patients a nutritional supplement (in addition to the usual hospital diet) for reducing or reversing weight loss.

Over a period of 12 months, elderly people who were admitted to a large geriatric unit for a routine cause were recruited into the study if they fell into one of the following three Nutritional Groups at admission: 1 = severely under-nourished, 2 = moderately under-nourished, 3 = adequately nourished. At random, the patients in each group were assigned either 1 = to receive or 0 = not to receive the Supplement.

Each patient's Time of Stay (weeks) in hospital was recorded, up to a maximum of 6 weeks. The patients were weighed at admission to hospital and again at discharge. Using these data, their Weight Gain (kg) during their hospital stay was determined.

Prepare a Statistical Analysis Plan (SAP) that assesses the effect of the supplement (and other factors) on weight gain