

kidney disease

Assessment

Generalized edema resulting from any of the above types is manifested by swelling in the extremities, face, perineum, and torso. Loss of normal skin creases may be assessed. Daily weights are more sensitive indicators of water gain or loss and should be obtained. Abdominal girth measurement changes may also be an indicator of edema in children. Pitting edema may occur and can be assessed by pressing the fingertip against a bony prominence for 5 seconds. If the tissue rebounds immediately on removing the finger, the patient does not have pitting edema. A quick way to determine the severity is to measure the degree of pitting edema (Fig. 22-1).

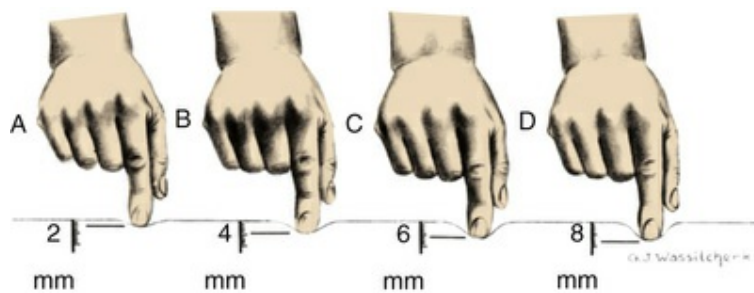


FIG 22-1 Assessment of pitting edema. **A**, +1. **B**, +2. **C**, +3. **D**, +4.

Therapeutic Management

The primary goal in the management of edema is treatment of the underlying disease process, which is discussed elsewhere in relation to the specific disorder. However, an essential aspect in the management of any fluid overload is early recognition in which nurses play a vital role. The management of edema is discussed throughout the text with specific conditions.

Gastrointestinal Dysfunction

The primary function of the GI tract is the digestion and absorption of nutrients. The extensive surface area of the GI tract and its digestive function represent the major means of exchange between