

New approach to underweight COPD patients

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Malnutrition often goes hand in hand with COPD and is difficult to treat. In a recent study researchers at the University of Gothenburg, have come up with a new equation to calculate the energy requirement for underweight COPD patients. It is hoped that

this will lead to better treatment results and, ultimately, better quality of life for these patients.

Recently published in the *International Journal of [Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease](#)*, the study involved a total of 86 patients with an average age of 64. In contrast to studies in other countries, more than half of the patients were women, whereas previous studies have focused on men.

"We've come up with the only equation to date that's specially designed for COPD patients, and that calculates just how many calories a patient needs," says Frode Slinde, docent at the Sahlgrenska Academy's Department of Clinical Nutrition. "We've already shown that the existing equations, designed for healthy individuals, do not work well for COPD patients."

The results of the study offer a more accurate estimate of each patient's energy requirement, and could lead to a better and more individual nutritional approach. Previously a standard

calculation was used to determine a patient's energy requirement, but the

researchers believe that the new equation is more likely to help COPD patients to stop losing weight and even put on weight.

"We can now tailor treatments and quickly evaluate the results," says Slinde. "A better nutritional status has been linked with patients feeling better and not needing as much care as before, which could cut the cost of care to society in the long run. As far as COPD patients are concerned, a better nutritional status translates into better quality of life and a longer life."

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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