

# NUTRITION-FOCUSED PHYSICAL EXAM

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AN ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK



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ASPEN's mission is to improve patient care by advancing the science and practice of clinical nutrition and metabolism.

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ISBN 978-1-889622-29-3 Print edition

ISBN 978-1-889622-30-9 Ebook edition

Printed in the United States of America.

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## PREFACE

The Cleveland Clinic Center for Human Nutrition (CHN) has developed this Illustrated Nutrition-Focused Physical Exam (NFPE) Handbook to assist bedside clinicians in the nutrition assessment of their patients and to help discern the presence and degree of malnutrition. The Academy-ASPEN Consensus Statement and Characteristics for Identification of Malnutrition (2012) has been a catalyst to realizing the importance of incorporating the NFPE as part of a comprehensive nutrition assessment. Most healthcare disciplines perform a physical exam of their patients, and a NFPE should be part of the nutrition clinician's skill set.

With the release of the Consensus Statement the CHN embarked on a departmental goal to standardize our approach in assessing the nutritional status of our patients. A comprehensive training program was developed centered around online education modules and live patient simulations. All clinicians, including dietitians, dietetic technicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, fellows, physicians, and our clerical staff

embraced the importance of this effort. The project became so successful that we were able to offer it to dietitians and students from other institutions.

Based on our experiences and training scores of dietitians on how to diagnose malnutrition, it became evident that a learning tool was needed with step-by-step instructions on how to perform a NFPE and visual aids to demonstrate how to assess physical findings. The authors of this handbook contributed their expertise to provide photos, illustrations, and specific tips and techniques in performing the NFPE. We hope this handbook is a useful resource, enhances the skill set of clinicians and promotes confidence to perform a NFPE.

We especially would like to express our gratitude to ASPEN, who with great enthusiasm, was willing to provide us with the opportunity to collaborate to produce this handbook. We appreciate the relationship cultivated with ASPEN over many years, which is one of collegiality and a shared vision.

CINDY HAMILTON, MS, RD, LD, FAND

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