NUTRITION & IMMUNE STATUS

Physical assessment of common markers of malnutrition, maldigestion, malabsorption, hypermetabolic stress syndrome and protein calorie malnutrition. Exam to be conducted by a healthcare professional.

General Appearance:
- Undernourished, skinny (especially the temporal muscles)

Hair:
- Dull, dry
- Thin, fine, straight
- Easily plucked
- Areas of lighter or darker spots
- Hair loss

Face:
- Pale complexion
- Generalized swelling
- Dark areas on cheeks
- Dark circles under eyes
- Lumpy or flaky skin around the nose and mouth
- Enlarged parotid glands

Eyes:
- Difficulty adjusting to the dark
- Dull appearance
- Dry and either pale or red membranes
- Triangular, shiny gray spots on conjunctivas
- Red and fissured eyelid corners
- Bloodshot ring around cornea

Lips:
- Red and swollen, especially at corners
- Cheilosis (fissures and chapping of lips)

Tongue:
- Swollen
- Purple and raw-looking with sores and abnormal papillae

Teeth:
- Missing, or emerging abnormally
- Visible cavities or dark spots
- Bleeding gums

Nails:
- Spoon-shaped
- Brittle
- Ridged

Neck:
- Swollen thyroid gland

Skin:
- Dry, flaky
- Swollen, with lighter and darker spots, some resembling bruises
- Tight and drawn, with poor turgor (elasticity)
- Dermatitis
- Retarded wound healing
- Skin lesions

Smell and Taste:
- Partial loss of taste
- Partial loss of smell

Musculoskeletal System:
- Muscle wasting
- Muscle weakness
- Muscle atrophy
- Knock-knee or bowlegs
- Bumps on ribs
- Swollen joints
- Musculoskeletal hemorrhages
- Stunted growth, loss of height
- Dowager’s hump
- Tetany (muscle twitches and/or cramps)

Cardiovascular System:
- Heart rate above 100 beats/minute
- Arrhythmias
- Elevated blood pressure

Abdomen:
- Enlarged liver and spleen

Reproductive System:
- Decreased libido
- Amenorrhea
- Retarded development of the reproductive system

Nervous System:
- Irritability
- Mental confusion
- Abnormal behavior
- Depression
- Paresthesias (tingling) in hands and feet
- Loss of proprioception (unable to maintain balance with eyes closed)
- Decreased ankle and knee reflexes
- Paralysis (no spinal cord injury)
- Tremor

Consider blood deficiency (pernicious anemia) with the following clinical picture:
- Considerable weight loss without apparent cause
- Burning tongue
- General weakness, malaise and fatigue
- Numbness and tingling in the extremities
- Alternating constipation and diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Bleeding gums
- Ataxia (incoordination and irregularity of voluntary, purposeful movements)
- Diplopia (double vision) and blurred vision
- Irritability
- Headache

Ethnic Background:
- White (non-Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic
- African American
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- Native North American
- East Indian

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Initial Test Score</th>
<th>Retest Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Gastric Function</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. GI Inflammation</td>
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<td>C. Small Intestine &amp; Pancreas</td>
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<td>D. Colon</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Ovarian Function</td>
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<td>F. Estrogen/Progesterone Decline</td>
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<td>IV. Glucose Regulation</td>
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