

# ESPEN 2015 Abstract Submission

*Topic: Nutrition and cancer*

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## THE ASSESSMENT OF ANOREXIA IN PATIENTS WITH CANCER: CUT-OFF VALUES FOR THE FAACT-A/CS AND THE VAS FOR APPETITE

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**Presentation Method:** Oral or Poster presentation

**Please indicate your professional occupation:** Other

**The presenting author fulfills the above conditions and wants to apply for a travel award:** Yes

**I confirm that the presenting author is under the age of 35:** Yes

**Rationale:** Anorexia is a frequently observed symptom in patients with cancer and is associated with limited food intake. In combination with cancer cachexia, anorexia induces muscle wasting and weight loss. Diagnostic instruments such as the Anorexia/Cachexia Subscale (A/CS) of the Functional Assessment of Anorexia/Cachexia Therapy (FAACT) questionnaire and the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) for appetite have been recommended in the assessment of anorexia, but validated cut-off values are lacking. This study aimed to obtain cut-off values of these instruments for the assessment of anorexia in patients with cancer.

**Methods:** The FAACT-A/CS and the VAS for appetite were administered to patients with cancer before start of chemotherapy. As reference standard for anorexia, two external criteria were used: 1) a cut-off value of  $\geq 2$  on the anorexia symptom scale of the EORTC QLQ C-30; 2) the question "Do you experience a decreased appetite?" (Yes/No). ROC curves were used to examine the optimal cut-off values for the FAACT-A/CS and VAS.

**Results:** A total of 273 patients (58% male;  $64.0 \pm 10.6$  years) was included. The median score on the FAACT-A/CS was 38 (IQR 32-42) points and 77 (IQR 47-93) points on the VAS. Considering both external criteria, the optimal cut-off value for the FAACT-A/CS was  $\leq 37$  (Sensitivity (se) 80%, specificity (sp) 81%, positive predictive value (PV<sup>+</sup>) 79%, negative predictive value (PV<sup>-</sup>) 82%) and for the VAS was  $\leq 70$  (se 76%, sp 83%, PV<sup>+</sup> 80%, PV<sup>-</sup> 79%).

**Conclusion:** For the assessment of anorexia in patients with cancer our study suggests cut-off values of  $\leq 37$  for the FAACT-A/CS and  $\leq 70$  for the VAS for appetite. Future studies should confirm our findings in other patient samples.

**Disclosure of Interest:** None Declared

**Keywords:** Anorexia, Cut-off values