

Nutritional status of alcoholic patients: Its possible relationship to alcoholic liver damage

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This study was performed to look for a possible relationship between the nutritional status and the presence of liver damage in alcoholic patients. One hundred chronic alcoholics admitted for treatment to the Alcoholism Ward, without clinical signs of liver failure, were studied. In 84, anthropometric nutritional indexes, liver function tests, and a liver biopsy were performed; in 69 patients a dietary survey was obtained. A dietary imbalance was observed in the total group; 65% of ingested calories were derived from ethanol. The intake of proteins, vitamins, and minerals was below the RDA, NAS/USA, and no differences were found between patients with and without liver damage. Neither were significant differences in daily alcohol calories or total ethanol dose found between both groups of patients. Mean anthropometric values were within 80 to 100% of commonly used standards. However, patients with alcoholic hepatitis and/or cirrhosis had a significantly higher percentage of ideal body w