Oncology Nutrition

Nutrition Support
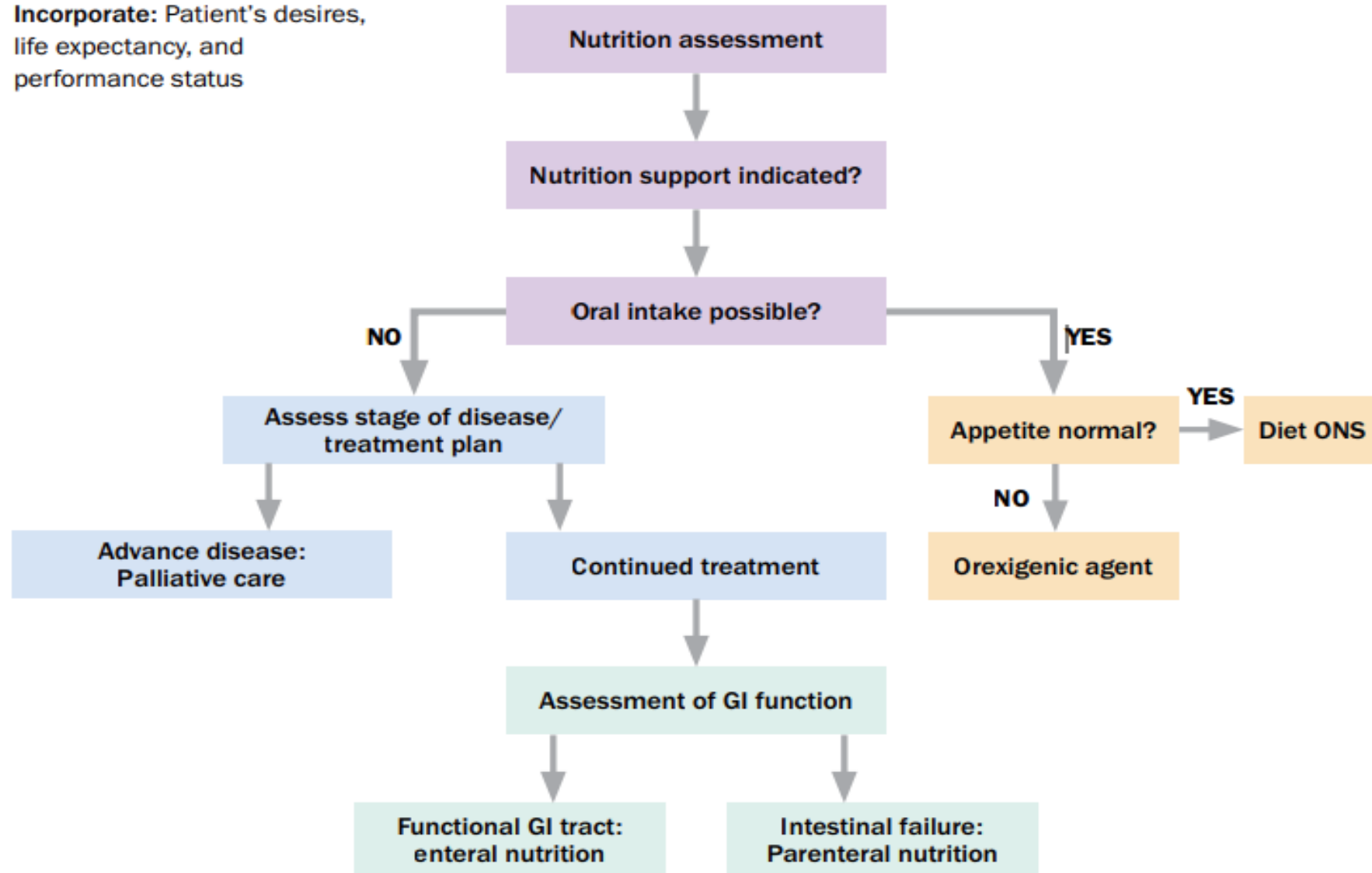
What is nutrition support?

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- **A way to meet nutritional needs when eating by mouth is difficult or not an option**

- **Nutrition support options:**
  - Enteral feeding or tube feeding
  - Parenteral nutrition or TPN

When is enteral nutrition indicated?

Incorporate: Patient's desires, life expectancy, and performance status

Nutrition assessment

↓

Nutrition support indicated?

↓

Oral intake possible?

— **NO** → **Assess stage of disease/ treatment plan**

— **YES** → **Appetite normal?**

Assess stage of disease/ treatment plan
- ↓ → **Advance disease: Palliative care**
- ↓ → **Continued treatment**

Appetite normal?
- **YES** → **Diet ONS**
- **NO** → **Orexigenic agent**

Continued treatment

↓

Assessment of GI function
- ↓ **Functional GI tract: enteral nutrition**
- ↓ **Intestinal failure: Parenteral nutrition**

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Enteral nutrition, Tube Feeding

- Still uses the gut
- Helps maintain normal GI and other functions
- Can be used in combination with oral diet

Tube Feeding Formula

- 8-12 oz cans
- Covered as medication through insurance
- Totally nutritionally adequate

Tube Feeding Tubes

Naso-Gastric Tube:

short-term option is a feeding tube from your nose to stomach/or small intestine

PEG:

Long term option, surgical procedure

Both can be removed

Nose

NG-tube

Feeding tube

Stomach

Feeding Tube

Stomach — G-tube

Jejunum (small intestine) — J-tube

Tube Feeding Administration

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Bolus Feeding:

Feeding a can of formula
via syringe

Pros:

- Mimics normal eating pattern
- Minimal equipment

Challenges:

- Need to administer 4-6 times per day
- Need to use steady hands

Tube Feeding Administration

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Gravity Feeding:

IV pole and bag filled with formula

Pros:

- Minimal "hands-on"
- Easy to digest
- Need to administer 2-3 times per day

Challenges:

- Takes 45-60 minutes per feeding
- Need to be sitting up

Tube Feeding Administration

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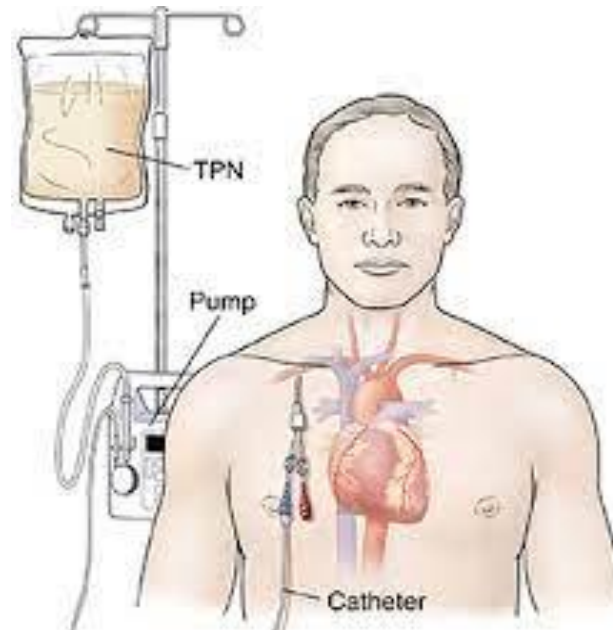## Continuous Feeding:

IV pole and pump

Pros:

- Slow, consistent delivery
- Easy to tolerate and digest

Challenges:

- Need to run 12-24 hours
- Mobility
- Pump use

Parenteral Nutrition Support

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- Used when gut is not functional for nutrition

- Requires IV access

- Requires pump/IV pole

- Totally nutritionally adequate

- Close monitoring of labs

Potential complications:

- High blood sugar
- High triglycerides
- Risk of infection
- Liver disorder

Transitioning Off Nutrition Support

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- **Typically after treatment is done**

- **Wean down nutrition support as oral intake increases**

- **Tube or IV can be removed after it is no longer needed**