Abstract

Background: There are few data on trends in home enteral nutrition (HEN) practice in different countries. NADYA is the Spanish home artificial nutrition (HAN) group, and is responsible for the Spanish HAN registry. Method: We performed a 16-year retrospective study (1992-2007) of the Spanish HEN registry by retrieving data from the NADYA database and from publications of the working group. People receiving more than 1000 kcal/d with an enteral formula were included regardless of the access route (oral/tube feeding). Results: The number of patients registered increased more than 8 times during the study period: the current prevalence is 113 patients/106 inhabitants (oral and tube feeding), or 41 patients/106 inhabitants (tube feeding). The distribution of the patients was not uniform, and most came from six autonomous communities (Catalonia, Galicia, Castilla-León, Madrid, Andalusia and Extremadura). Gender distribution was nearly 1:1. The number of paediatric patients was very low, representing less than 10% of the total. Mean age in adults was above 65 years in most of the reports. We observed an increase in the age of the patients over the years. The most common underlying diseases were neurological disorders, followed by cancer. We observed an increase in the use of the oral route, from 5.8% in 1992 to 64% in 2007, with a parallel decrease in the use of nasogastric tubes. Gastrostomy tubes were used in 15-20% of the patients. The number of complications was low (less than one complication/patient/year), the most frequent being change of tube, followed by gastrointestinal complications. The principal reasons for discontinuing treatment were death related to the underlying disease (40-50%) and switch to oral diet (30-40%). Most of the patients (75%) were followed by the hospital nutrition unit. Provision of the enteral formula and disposables varied according to the autonomous community. Most of the patients had limited physical activity or were chair- or bed-bound, requiring partial or total help in their daily life. Conclusions: The use of HEN has increased dramatically in the last 16 years in Spain. Most of the patients were elderly people with neurological disorders and limited physical activity. The oral route was the most frequently used. The number of complications was low. The mortality rate in these patients was highly related to the underlying disease.

Keywords

Home enteral nutrition, Registry, Complications.