Prevalence of Sarcopenia in a Danish geriatric out-patient population

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BACKGROUND AND AIM
Using the European Working Group on Sarcopenia (EWGSOP) criterias on a geriatric outpatient-population the aim was to assess the prevalence of sarcopenia and to describe the association between sarcopenia and age, gender, body-mass index (BMI).

METHODS
According to the EWGSOP’s recommendations, patients referred to a geriatric outpatient-clinic were assessed for sarcopenia by measuring:
- Muscle mass (Appendicular skeletal muscle mass (ASM)): Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA)
- Muscle strength: Hand-grip strength (HGS)
- Muscle function: 10 meter walk (GS)

Skeletal Muscle Mass Index (SMI) was calculated by ASM/height² (kg/m²). Patients were classified:
- No sarcopenia (normal SMI)
- Pre-sarcopenia (reduced SMI, normal HGS and GS)
- Sarcopenia (reduced SMI and reduced HGS or GS)
- Severe sarcopenia (reduced SMI, HGS and GS)

RESULTS
189 patients were screened for inclusion; 80 were included.
- 12 (15%) had severe sarcopenia
- 9 (11%) sarcopenia
- 8 (10%) pre-sarcopenia
- 51 (64%) no sarcopenia

Mean age was significantly higher in the SARC-GROUP (sarcopenia and severe sarcopenia) than in the NOSARC-GROUP (pre-sarcopenia and no sarcopenia) (p: 0.009) and BMI was significantly lower in the SARC-GROUP (p <0.0001).
No difference was found in gender distribution (p=0.729)

CONCLUSION
Prevalence of sarcopenia was 26% in our study highlighting that this condition is common in a geriatric outpatient population. Assessment using the EWGSOP diagnostic method was feasible and is suggested to be part of the standard clinical comprehensive geriatric assessment.