



Nutrition and Dietetics

Bringing food into hospital

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Introduction

The Trust has a legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990 and associated legislation relating to the composition, labelling, safety, handling, control, and hygiene of food.

The patients' meals we serve every day are carefully prepared and designed to offer patients a healthy balanced diet of set selected menus with a range of hot and cold food and drinks.

Patients are encouraged to select a healthy and safe food choice with appropriate advice given where required by dietitians.

We have an obligation to ensure any foods brought into the hospitals is suitable and does not include any illicit or unauthorised items.

This helps us to prevent or reduce the risk of infection, food poisoning, food borne illnesses, and unwanted interaction with prescribed medication.

Any food brought in should be suitable for the dietary needs of the patient. Any advice regarding the suitability of foods can be obtained from the nurse in charge or dietitian.

- i** On arrival at the ward all food gifts should be declared. An appropriately trained nurse will check the food is suitable for the patient, check containers and labelling.

- ❗ Risk of allergy and swallow level will be reviewed and any new recommendations will be highlighted.
- ❗ All packaging must be intact with the use by or best before date not exceeded.
- ❗ Only food sealed by the manufacturer using heat seals, tamperproof lids and bottle tops will be allowed.
- ❗ Home produced items and goods sealed only with a sticker will not be allowed.

To ensure high risk foods that support the growth of pathogenic bacteria are avoided there is a restriction on the foods allowed to be brought into the ward for patient safety.

Please find guidelines on the next pages on which foods should and should not be brought into the hospital.

Permitted foods

These foods can be bought in

- ✔ Dried soup packets, dried meat products that require no refrigeration e.g. Biltong.
- ✔ Pre-packed muffins, tea cakes, pancakes, scones, or similar.
- ✔ UHT deserts that require no refrigeration e.g. long life individual pots of custard, chocolate desserts.
- ✔ Wrapped fresh fruit.
- ✔ Products that are sealed not loose. Dried fruit tubs of pre-packed fruit. Pre-wrapped biscuits, crackers and cakes (not fresh or artificial cream).
- ✔ Pre-wrapped chocolate or sweets.
- ✔ Individual packets of crisps, popcorn, pretzels or other savoury snacks.
- ✔ Bottled drinks (plastic only) e.g. squashes or carbonates
Small quantities of fruit juice or smoothies.
- ✔ Preserves e.g. jam, marmalade, honey, marmite, bovril (in small plastic jars).
- ✔ Pre-wrapped nuts and seeds.

Prohibited foods

These foods cannot be bought in

- ❗ Raw meat or fish, cooked meat and poultry, fresh meat products e.g. gravy, soups and stock.
- ❗ Pre-wrapped sandwiches (all fillings).
- ❗ Any other food item which requires refrigeration or heating e.g. pies, pasties, sausage rolls, cheese, eggs, scotch eggs.
- ❗ Fresh or artificial cream products e.g. custards, yoghurts, mousse, cakes and ice cream.
- ❗ Loose fruit or fruit products that have not been pre-packed and sealed.
- ❗ Items with added alcohol e.g. chocolate liqueurs, stollen and similar festive foods.
- ❗ Pick 'n' mix.
- ❗ Large packets of crisps or other savoury snacks that cannot be consumed within 24 hours of opening.
- ❗ Large cartons of milkshakes and fruit juice that can't be consumed within 24 hours once opened
- ❗ Homemade preserves that are not sealed using heat seals, and tamperproof lids

- ❗ Loose nuts and seeds not pre-wrapped.
- ❗ Take-away meals including pizzas, curries, beef burgers, and kebabs.

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Accessibility

Patient information leaflets are available on our website:
www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets

Get in touch

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Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

Phone 0800 328 7971

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