



South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust

Warwickshire Dietetic Service

Ensuring good nutrition and hydration

Information for carers, families and friends of people living in their own home.

Standards to improve Nutrition and Hydration across Warwickshire have been developed.

There are standards for people living in residential care and another for people living in their own homes.

These standards have been developed in Warwickshire because patients, service users, families, carers, health, social care, third and private sector stakeholders have identified a need to improve nutrition and hydration in all settings.

This information is for people who live at home and for the family members and friends who care for them.

Ensuring good nutrition and hydration

Below are the standards that any worker who provides care for people living in their own home should follow.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding how these standards are met, please ask your care provider, the person who organises that care for you or your GP.

Standard 1	My nutrition and hydration needs are identified through relevant assessments, including the assistance I need to achieve them, taking into account my individual preferences.
Standard 2	A nutrition and hydration screening is carried out. I am assisted to complete a self-screening tool or my carer completes one for me.
Standard 3	A care plan regarding my nutrition and hydration needs is developed and communicated to all relevant staff, carers, friends and family.
Standard 4	My carers ensure the availability of adequate food and fluids to enable me to meet or improve my nutrition and hydration status. They assist me in the preparation of snacks, meals and beverages including nutritional supplements if I need this.
Standard 5	My carers ensure the environment, equipment and type of food and drinks available enable my oral intake and independence to be maximised where possible.
Standard 6	My carers allocate resources to enable appropriate assistance to be provided to meet my nutrition and hydration needs. and / or They also identify if current resource allocation is sufficient to meet my needs and highlight to managers where it is inadequate.
Standard 7	My carers request a referral, or refer me for professional assessment if I need this. For example to Speech and Language Therapy if I have difficulties swallowing, Occupational Therapy for equipment such as special plates and cutlery and to a Registered Dietitian for special dietary needs relating to my illness or condition.
Standard 8	My carers attend or complete appropriate training to enable them to understand the rationale behind the plans for me regarding food provision, nutritional assessment, screening, nutrition support and hydration.

The remainder of this leaflet gives information to support carers who are family or friends to give appropriate food and drink.

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Weight Loss

If you are concerned that someone is losing too much weight, use this self-screening tool <http://www.malnutritionselfscreening.org>.

This will identify if the amount of weight they have lost is a cause for concern.

You could also take them to their doctor, or if they have one, ask a community nurse what their MUST score is. MUST is a screening tool for malnutrition risk used by the NHS and care homes. If the person you care for has been identified at risk, the person carrying out the assessment should give them information about changes that can be made to improve what they eat and drink.

If you need more help or information, they may be able to refer the person you care for to a Registered Dietitian.

Difficulty Swallowing

If you have concerns regarding swallowing, a referral to a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) may be appropriate. This may be done by the person themselves, or via their GP, community nurse (if they have one) or other professional involved.

The SALT can assess and manage difficulty with swallowing. They may advise on changes to the consistency of food or drink, or strategies that may help to increase the safety or ease of swallowing. If changes are made to food or fluid consistencies, information leaflets and advice specific to the individual will be provided to ensure you can follow the advice given.

Experiencing problems using cutlery or cups

If you have concerns regarding their ability to eat and drink independently, physical needs or posture, ask their GP or community nurse to recommend equipment that might help. They may refer them to an Occupational Therapist for specialist advice.

Care from Care Agencies

If your family member or friend is being assisted with shopping, cooking or eating by care workers, you can help by providing information regarding food and drinks that your relative or friend prefers. If there is not enough time allocated to help with meals, ask for a review from the care provider.

On a Special diet due to a medical condition

If the person you care for is on a special diet due to a medical condition and you are not sure what food and drink to give them, ask their health care professional to refer them to a dietitian for more information.

The information on the next 3 pages will explain what the person you care for needs to eat to remain as healthy as possible.

Further Information

You will be able to find information sheets relating to a variety of special diets on the South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust (SWFT) web site: Go to www.swft.nhs.uk > our-services> adults-out-hospital-services > dietetics> patient-information-leaflets-and-related-link.

The SWFT website also contains information on how to refer to Dietitians and SALT.

Preparing Meals for people who are a healthy weight

including vegetarians, people with diabetes and those trying to lose weight.

What to offer

Each day meals and snacks should provide the following foods.

5 portions fruit, salad and vegetables.

A portion of potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, chapatti, noodles and other starchy carbohydrates at each meal. Wholegrain products should be encouraged e.g. high fibre cereals, wholemeal bread.

3 portions of low fat milk and dairy products.

A portion of poultry, fish, eggs, meat, beans, pulses or other proteins at 2 meals. Oily fish is recommended at least once a week (providing omega-3 fats). Foods with a high iron content should be recommended twice a week (beef, lamb or offal).

Use unsaturated fats and oils (e.g. olive or rapeseed oil) where possible.

Foods and drink with a high fat or sugar content should only be recommended as occasional treats.

At least 6 cups of fluid a day—water, tea, coffee and sugar free squash all count.

Milk

1 pint / 500ml semi skimmed milk each day should be used for beverages and meals.

Breakfast

The following provides a healthy breakfast:

fruit or fruit juice

cereal and milk

AND / OR

bread or toast with preserves, butter or unsaturated spread

AND / OR

poached or scrambled egg, grilled bacon

tomatoes, mushrooms or baked beans

where a cooked breakfast is eaten, food should not be fried every day

tea, coffee, water.

Snacks and drinks

Fruit, crackers, scotch pancakes, pizza slice, and plain biscuits can be suggested.

At least 6 cups of fluid a day—water, tea, coffee and sugar free squash all count.

Continued

Preparing Meals for people who are a healthy weight (continued)

	including vegetarians, people with diabetes and those trying to lose weight.
Main meal	<p>All meals listed below can be served with vegetables (tinned, frozen or fresh), and potatoes, rice, pasta, noodles, couscous or bread.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bacon and egg with tomatoes and hash browns.• Sausages or burgers with baked beans and rolls or potatoes.• Oven ready fish, fish fingers or fish cakes with peas and oven chips.• Macaroni, lasagne, cauliflower cheese or chilli.• Jacket potato with cheese, beans or tuna mayonnaise.• Corned beef hash.• Stew or casserole.• Shepherds pie, cottage pie or fish pie.• Curry or dhal with rice or chapatti.• Fish in cheese, butter or parsley sauce.• Ham or cheese omelette with oven chips and salad.• Ready meals which can be oven cooked or microwaved - look for those with 400 calories or more. <p>Desserts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low fat / low sugar yoghurt.• Tinned fruit with custard or ice cream.• Sponge cake or fruit crumble with cream, custard or ice cream.• Mousse, crème caramel, egg custard, panna cotta.• Milk puddings e.g. rice, tapioca, semolina.• Trifle with cream.• Cheesecake. <p>People wanting to reduce their weight may need help to choose a low calorie meal with a suitable dessert option such as fruit or sugar free yoghurt.</p>
Lighter meal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sandwiches filled with cold meat, bacon, tinned fish, cheese, hard boiled egg or peanut butter.• Toast with baked beans and cheese, pate, cheese, ravioli, spaghetti and cheese, eggs, pilchards, sardines, ham.• Jacket potato with cheese, coleslaw, beans or chilli.• Salad with meat, fish or egg with bread or potato.• Creamy soup with bread and butter.• Chunky soup with added meat, fish or beans.• Packet soups or instant soups can be made with milk instead of water.
Drinks	Offer a drink with or after each meal. The aim is to have at least 6 cups of fluid a day.

Preparing meals for people who are underweight , have a poor appetite or are on a texture modified diet

	<p>People requiring a texture modified diet should follow the specific advice given. If there is any doubt about the suitability of a food, drink or snack, please contact your SALT or Dietitian for clarification.</p> <p>Follow the overall advice on the previous pages, with the following adaptations.</p>
Breakfast	<p>The following can be tried to increase the calories and protein consumed:</p> <p>fortified milk should be used to prepare cereal, porridge and hot drinks</p> <p>food can be fried in oil for a cooked breakfast.</p>
Snacks and drinks	<p>Offer at least 2 nutritious snacks of the correct consistency daily.</p> <p>Suitable snacks include teacakes, bagels or scones, crackers or sandwiches with a filling such as cheese or egg with mayonnaise, mackerel pate or peanut butter.</p> <p>Creamy desserts and yoghurt.</p> <p>Milky drinks should be encouraged.</p>
Milk	<p>A minimum of 1 pint / 500ml full fat or fortified milk should be recommended. Use in drinks, desserts and on cereal.</p> <p>To fortify milk add 3—4 tablespoons of milk powder to 500ml milk.</p>
Main meal	<p>A high energy, high protein meal should be offered.</p> <p>To increase the calories, add high calorie ingredients such as oil, cream cheese and butter. For example sprinkle extra cheese on cottage pie, toss vegetables in oil and add cream to custard.</p> <p>Ensure a portion of meat, fish, eggs, nuts cheese or yoghurt is offered at each meal.</p> <p>Desserts such as sponge or crumble with custard or milk puddings are a good choice. These can also be given at snack time.</p>
Lighter meal	<p>A meal can be made higher in protein and calories by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adding mayonnaise or salad cream, pickles or relish • use a thick spread of full-fat margarine or butter • try pastry and other high calorie sides such as pie, quiche , samosa, scotch egg and coleslaw • crisps, olives and other savoury snacks can be offered as well.
Drinks	<p>Offer at least 6 drinks a day.</p> <p>Nourishing milky drinks are a good choice between meals.</p> <p>For people with a small appetite, offer sips of a drink with meals, but leave giving a full drink until after meals as these may fill people up before they have finished eating.</p>

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How you can help maximise food and fluid intake

Wherever possible, involve them in meal planning and preparation. For example, they could peel carrots while sitting in their chair, or chat to you while you are in the kitchen.

Visit at mealtimes and offer the support the person you care for needs.

- Use serviettes, aprons or adult bibs, to protect clothing.
- Adapted crockery and cutlery is available to enable people to feed themselves where appropriate.



- Where necessary, provide assistance sensitively. They may only need food cutting into smaller pieces or packaging opening.
- Socialising during mealtimes should be encouraged but some people do not want to eat if there are other people around, especially if they have physical difficulties eating and drinking. They may want privacy to avoid embarrassment or loss of dignity.
- If you have time to sit and eat a meal with them or can invite them to eat at your home, do so.
- Give the person time to eat; they should not be rushed.

Food should look appetising. If large meals overwhelm them, serve smaller portions and offer seconds.

Avoid interruptions to mealtimes, such as visits that distract from eating, toileting or administering medication. Switch off the TV if the distraction is affecting how much they eat and drink.

Offer finger food to those who have difficulty using cutlery. For ideas of finger foods to offer, go to the Caroline Walker Trust booklet called Eating well: Supporting older people and older people with dementia: Practical guide

<https://www.cwt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/EW-Old-Dementia-Practical-Resource.pdf>

Ensure that cold drinks such as fresh water or squash are on offer at all mealtimes and freely available throughout the day.

Make sure food is available and accessible between mealtimes. Drinks can be left in flasks or bottles and snacks kept in small containers on a table next to their chair or bed.

Equality Statement

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect.

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

PALS

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email:

Pals@swft.nhs.uk or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance to the hospital.

If you have any queries about your diet, please contact us:

Dietetic Department
George Eliot Hospital
Nuneaton
Tel 024 7686 5098

Dietetic Department
Warwick Hospital
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