

Regional nutrition guidance for care home residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

All COVID-19 positive residents are at risk of malnutrition - oral nutritional supplement (ONS) is indicated
Record details of malnutrition risk, eg MUST screening score, poor appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea, severe fatigue, loss of taste

(Non COVID-19 residents should continue to be referred, as per Trust protocols)

Refer to Dietitian

No

**Does the resident have difficulty swallowing?
 Are they on a texture modified diet or thickened fluids?**

Yes

**Dietary recommendations
 (See guiding principles overleaf)**

Early nutritional intervention is vital for recovery - commence high protein ONS x2/day from box below

- ✓ Implement food fortification
- ✓ Offer full cream / fortified milk to drink with all meals
- ✓ Offer snacks/nutritious drinks in between meals and milky puddings twice daily
- ✓ Ensure adequate fluid intake 6-8 glasses/day
- ✓ Consider taste changes and mouth care
- ✓ Ensure 10 micrograms of Vitamin D/day

Residents must continue on therapeutic diets, eg diabetic, coeliac and renal etc. Liaise with Community Dietitian, as required

Follow recommendations as per SLT and Dietitian

Commence on appropriate ONS x2/day between meal times:

If Level 1 fluids commence on:

Altraplen Protein (200ml)

If Level 2 fluids commence on:

Fresubin Thickened Level 2 (200ml)

If Level 3 fluids commence on:

Fresubin Thickened Level 3 (200ml) or
 Nutilis Complete Drink Level 3 (125ml) or
 Nutilis Complete Crème Level 3 (125g)

If Level 4 fluids commence on:

Nutilis Fruit Level 4 or Fresubin 2kcal Crème

Note: Change ONS choice if the level of fluid recommended by SLT changes. Seek advice from the Community Dietitian for residents on therapeutic diets and appropriate ONS

High Protein Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS)

Not suitable for residents on a renal diet

ONS should be sipped slowly between meals

- Altraplen Protein® (300kcal, 20g protein, 200ml)
- Fortisip Compact Protein® (300kcal, 18g protein, 125ml)
- Fresubin Protein Energy® (300kcal, 20g protein, 200ml)
- Ensure Plus Advance® (330kcal, 20g protein, 220ml)
- Fortisip Extra® (320kcal, 20g protein, 200ml)

ONLY If milk based supplement not tolerated offer 1.5kcal/ml juice style ONS

Not suitable for residents with diabetes

- Altrajuce® (200ml)
- Ensure Plus Juice® (220ml)
- Fresubin Jucy® (200ml)
- Fortijuce® (200ml)

Key Community Nutrition and Dietetic Service contacts

- BHSCT: (028) 9504 2317**
- NHSCT: (028) 7034 7861**
- SEHSCT: (028) 9041 1792**
- SHSCT: (028) 3756 2060**
- WHSCT: L'Derry (028) 7135 5014; Omagh (028) 8283 5553; Fermanagh (028) 6638 2007**

Residents will be remotely monitored via the Healthcall Malnutrition portal, where available.

Key nutritional messages for care home residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Residents with COVID-19 are at high risk of malnutrition, particularly those experiencing loss of appetite, altered taste and gastro-intestinal symptoms

Loss of appetite/weight loss

- Aim for 3 small meals and 2-3 snacks or nourishing drinks between meals
- Offer a glass of full cream milk with all meals
- Offer 2 milk based puddings daily, eg custard, rice pudding
- Choose high calorie / protein foods, eg eggs, cheese, Greek yogurt
- Avoid low fat, diet or reduced sugar foods or drinks
- Assist with meals, if required
- Ensure a comfortable upright position to eat
- Allow time to eat

Altered taste

- Focus on foods well accepted by the resident
- Offer colder foods, as they may be tolerated better than hot foods
- Try the following:
 - season food with mustard, marinade or herbs
 - sharp, acidic food, eg lemon, grapefruit or pineapple
 - highly flavoured foods, eg curry, crisps
 - suck on boiled sweets or mints
 - experiment with new flavours textures and temperatures of foods
- Encourage regular sips of non-fizzy drinks throughout the day
- Brush teeth and tongue twice a day to ensure good oral hygiene

Food fortification

- Simple food substitutions can significantly increase the nutritional content of the diet:
 - add cream, butter, cheese or mayonnaise to savoury sauces, mashed potato, soup and pasta
 - add sugar*, jam*, honey* syrup*, or double cream to custard, porridge, milkshakes, fruit and cereals (*except if resident has diabetes)
- Add 4 tablespoons of dried milk powder to 1 pint of full cream milk (568ml). Use on cereals or to make porridge and nourishing drinks

Vitamin D

- Recent papers have highlighted the possible benefits of vitamin D in people with COVID-19.
- Sunshine is the best source of vitamin D. Residents, if able, should be encouraged to spend time outside (ideally 15 minutes, 2-3 times weekly)
- Dietary sources of Vitamin D include eggs, fortified cereals and margarine, oily fish, milk and butter
- Current recommendations state that people aged 65 years and over and those who are not exposed to adequate sun, should take a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D

Hydration

- Offer adequate fresh hot and cold drinks, aiming for 6-8 glasses daily, eg milky drinks, fruit juices, water (note some residents may be fluid restricted)
- Fluid requirements can increase due to warmer weather, raised temperature, vomiting and diarrhoea