

GP Guidance Starting Oral Nutritional Supplements in Primary Care

A guide to GP prescribing of Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) while awaiting dietetic review.

Oral nutritional supplements should only be prescribed after first line dietary advice (including food fortification) and over the counter build up drinks have been tried. Click [here](#)* for more information.

Key recommendations for prescribing Oral Nutritional Supplements

Product choices are shown in the table below.

Give **acute** prescriptions on a **short term** basis (1 bd), starting with a variety of flavours and refer the patient to the Dietitian for review.

First Line

- If the patient or carer can prepare drinks (including patients in care homes) start a powdered ONS.

Second Line

- If the patient needs a ready-made supplement use a milk-style 1.5kcal/ml ONS.
- A 125ml 2.4kcal/ml ONS may be preferable for patients with a poor appetite who may struggle to manage a 200ml ONS twice a day.
- Juice style ONS are beneficial for those who do not like milk, but are typically lower in protein, fat and micronutrients than milk style ONS. They may not be suitable for people with Diabetes (please consult the Dietetic department for advice).

Product Choices

Powdered ONS	Flavours	Presentation	Kcal/unit**	Price/unit (£)
Food Link Complete	Natural, strawberry, banana, chocolate, vanilla	57g sachet	386	0.61
Aymes Shake	Natural, strawberry, banana, chocolate, vanilla	57g sachet	388	0.70

** made with 200ml whole milk

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Disclaimer: City Hospitals Sunderland Nutrition and Dietetic Service do not recommend any particular product and this formulary is based simply on cost at the time of going to print and advice from the Medicines Optimisation team. It is entirely the decision of the clinician which ONS to prescribe.

*www.bapen.org.uk/tackling-malnutrition/nutritional-advice-and-information/treating-malnutrition/food-first-project

Milk style ONS (1.5 kcal/ml)	Flavours	Presentation	Kcal/unit	Price/unit (£)
Aymes Complete	Banana, strawberry, chocolate, vanilla	200ml bottle	300	1.26
Fortisip Bottle	neutral, vanilla, chocolate, toffee, banana, orange, strawberry, tropical fruit	200ml bottle	300	1.40

Milk style ONS (2.4 kcal/ml)	Flavours	Presentation	Kcal/unit	Price/unit (£)
Nutriplen	Strawberry, vanilla, harvest chocolate, banana	125ml bottle	300	1.45
Fortisip Compact	Vanilla, strawberry, banana, mocha, apricot, forest fruit, chocolate	125ml bottle	300	1.45

Juice style ONS (1.5kcal/ml)	Flavours	Presentation	Kcal/unit	Price/unit (£)
Fresubin Jucy Drink	Blackcurrant, cherry, apple, orange, pineapple	200ml bottle	300	1.88
Ensure Plus Juce	Apple, fruit punch, lemon-lime, orange, peach, strawberry	220ml bottle	330	1.97

*Please note, patients may be discharged from CHS on Nutricia products. This is for contractual reasons only. Patients should be treated as per this guideline in primary care.

Other ONS should only be prescribed on the request of a Dietitian to ensure that the patient's nutritional requirements are being met.