

SUPPLEMENT (ONS) PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES

A quick reference information sheet for use in Primary Care across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. To be read alongside [Prescribing Guidelines for Oral Nutritional Supplements ONS in Adults V4](#) and [The Think Food Approach in Care Homes - A practical guide](#)

Only consider prescribing ONS if a patient is identified as **high risk of malnutrition** using 'MUST' score. Set realistic nutritional/treatment goals for the patient and follow a **food based/food fortification approach first-line**. Continue to review patient regularly (every 1-3 months) against treatment goal, review need for ONS in addition to the food first approach where the patient has failed to achieve a positive change towards meeting treatment goals or the patient is at high risk of malnutrition.

For patients at high risk of malnutrition, where weight has continued to decrease for 3 months despite interventions: GP to request dietetic input either through community dietitian referral or PCN as appropriate.

If ONS is required, this should be prescribed twice daily* after meals/between meals. This ensures calorie and protein intake is sufficient to achieve weight gain, it also maximises the effectiveness and avoids reducing the individual's appetite for usual meals. ***NB: with the exception of one a day ONS products**

FIRST LINE: FOOD FIRST APPROACH

For all patients please encourage food fortification as a first-line approach.



For patients residing in a care home please also refer to the 'Think Food Approach in Care Homes', guidance document.

think food – think how?

Moderate/High RISK = 1 or 2

1 pint of milk (whole or semi-skimmed), **2** nourishing drinks & **3** snacks
Provides approximately 800 calories and 25g protein per day

HIGH RISK = 3 or 4

1 Pint of **fortified** milk, **2** 'Super shakes' **OR** **2** small volume puddings & **3** Snacks
Provides 1500 kcals and 40g protein per day

Fortified Milk Recipe

1. Take 4 tablespoons of dried milk powder
2. Add a small amount of full fat milk (blue top) from 1 pint of milk
3. Mix to a paste with no lumps
4. Add the remaining milk and stir well (Keep refrigerated and use within 24 hours)

1 pint of whole milk = 364 kcals, 18g protein
1 pint of **fortified** whole milk = 560 kcals, 38g protein

SECOND LINE: POWDERED ONS

Consider if food first approach does not meet treatment goal (weight gain or maintenance) or where individual has failed to achieve a positive change towards meeting treatment goals or is at high risk of malnutrition using 'MUST' score.

57g sachets - Weekly prescribing quantity: 798g Monthly prescribing quantity: 3,192g (at recommended twice daily prescribing)

Complan Shake – 380kcal, 16g protein, 5 flavour options is the most cost effective powdered ONS **Suitable alternatives for flavour preferences are: Energieshake** - 381kcal, 16g protein, 5 flavour options **OR**

Foodlink Complete – 383kcal, 19g protein, 5 flavour options **OR**

Savoury option = AYMES SAVOURY NB: lower protein and calorie content 251kcal, 9.2g protein

If unable to tolerate large volumes consider prescribing:

Aymes Shake Compact 320kcal, 12.2g **OR** **Foodlink Complete Compact** 318kcal, 15g protein

57g sachets - Monthly prescribing quantity: 3,192g

ONLY prescribe if unable to tolerate milk / requires vegan product consider prescribing:

Aymes Actasolve Smoothie 297kcal, 10.7g protein **66g sachets - Monthly prescribing quantity: 3,696g OR**

Nualtra Foodlink smoothie 287 kcal, 10g protein **66g sachets - Monthly prescribing quantity 3,696g**

THIRD LINE: READY MADE ONS

ONLY prescribe where powdered ONS unsuitable e.g. if a patient cannot make up a powdered ONS supplement and does not have appropriate care/support in place to support this.

200ml bottles - Weekly prescribing quantity: 2,800ml Monthly prescribing quantity: 11,200ml

Altraplen Energy is the most cost-effective ready-made ONS – 300kcal, 12g protein
4 flavour options.

Suitable alternatives for flavour preferences are: Energieshake Complete 1.5kcal – 300kcal, 12g protein,
4 flavour options **OR Aymes Complete** – 300kcal, 12g protein, 4 flavour options.

If unable to tolerate large volumes and compact required, consider prescribing:

Altraplen Compact Daily, once a day ONS (1x 250ml) - 600kcal, 24g protein - equivalent of 2 x compacts, 4
flavour options

Reduced plastic waste, more cost effective for the NHS when compared to prescribing 2 x compacts, to be taken
throughout the day.

OR Fortisip Compact (125ml) 300kcal, 12g protein, 6 flavour options

Monthly prescribing quantities = 7,000ml

ONLY prescribe if unable to tolerate milk/requires vegan product consider prescribing:

Fortisip Plant based Energy 1.5kcal, 300kcal, 12g plant protein, 2 flavour options

200ml bottles - Monthly prescribing quantity: 11,200ml

TOP TIPS WHEN PRESCRIBING ONS

General Principles

- Advise patients to take in between meals - do not recommend as a meal replacement.
- A one-week prescription or starter pack should be prescribed initially to avoid wastage in case products are not well tolerated. Starter packs should only be prescribed to trial a product or when the shaker needs to be replaced. Starter packs are more expensive and only one should be ordered per patient if needed to determine flavour preference.
- ONS should not routinely be added to a repeat prescription to ensure regular review, both in terms of nutritional status and compliance with products and flavours.
- Ensure patients with concerns regarding nutrition are weighed at the start of treatment and regularly thereafter to monitor treatment effect.
- Do not prescribe based on a hospital discharge summary unless advised by a Dietitian. Instead, please 'MUST' screen the patient and if at risk follow prescribing guidelines.
- Consider over the counter supplements such as Meriteine, Aymes, Complan, for those who request ONS but do not meet the ACBS criteria. These are available without prescription.

Specific Conditions

Take care when issuing ONS for patients with complex conditions (e.g. renal disease, liver disease, diabetes or palliative patients) these patients will require dietetic input and may require specialist products and more regular medical monitoring.

Specialist restricted products not for routine initiation in Primary Care. For restricted use under the supervision of a dietitian:

- Lower calorie products are not recommended, i.e. 1kcal/ml, e.g. Ensure cans
- Higher calorie milkshake style ONS that are not first or second line products in primary care, e.g. Enshake
- Modular supplements that do not provide a balance of nutrients, e.g. Calogen, Procal
- Specialist products which may be required for particular patient groups, e.g. renal patients, or those with bowel disorders, those with pressure ulcers, or those with dysphagia
- For requests made for Juce style ONS via SATH Endoscopy, please refer to the link: <https://www.sath.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Guidance-for-patients-with-type-1-and-2-diabetes.pdf>
- Pudding style supplements, as it should usually be possible for suitable homemade products to be suitably fortified unless they are recommended for dysphagia by SaLT
- Dessert style ONS may be considered as an option by the Dietitian where drink-style supplements are unsuitable. However, it is recognised similar calorie dense desserts can be shop bought and these should be recommended where possible.

For queries regarding prescribing nutritional supplements or a food first approach please contact:

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