Food and Drink

Information for patients and carers
This leaflet aims to give patients, their relatives and carers information about food and drink whilst in hospital.

Eating and drinking well is important during your hospital stay, as good nutrition and hydration will help your recovery. If your appetite is poor and you have lost weight you may be at risk of malnutrition and this can lead to complications such as pressure sores or infection.

If you have lost weight unintentionally or your appetite is poor please tell your nurse.

Please ask for any assistance that you need to help you to eat your meals or take your drinks.
Ward staff are available to help you if you require it, so please do not hesitate to ask and let us know if you:

- need help with eating and/or drinking
- cannot reach your meal or drinks
- cannot open containers
- cannot cut up your food
- have difficulty with swallowing or chewing
- find your menu options do not suit your needs
- need help in selecting your menu options
- have missed a meal or have received the wrong meal and would like a replacement
- are hungry between meals

Please let us know if there is anything that will help you to eat more easily such as:

- if you prefer to sit in a chair for your meals
- if you would find it easier to eat your food with special cutlery
- a softer diet rather than solid food
**Drink**

Try to drink eight cups of fluid per day. This can be water, tea, coffee, soft drinks, milk etc.

If you are worried that you are not drinking enough or that you need assistance to enable you to drink please tell your nurse.

You should expect that your water jug is replenished regularly and drinks are served with and between meals by our ward housekeepers.

Patients at risk of poor fluid intake may be provided with a water jug with a red lid. This is designed to alert staff that you may need help or encouragement to drink and that they should monitor your intake.

Some patients may have their drinks restricted for medical reasons. If this is the case your doctor or nurse will explain this to you.

Patients with swallowing difficulties may need to have their drinks thickened, this helps prevent drinks “going down the wrong way” – your Doctor, Nurse or Speech and Language Therapist will explain this to you.
Food

The Hospital menus are carefully planned to provide patients with adequate nutrition. Meals are served by our ward housekeepers.

Breakfast

We offer a continental style breakfast with fruit juice and a choice of cereals or porridge, toast (brown or white bread) with butter or spread and a selection of preserves. A range of drinks are available on the ward, including coffee, tea, (including decaffeinated versions, herbal teas, milk, cordials and hot chocolate).

Lunchtime meal

Lunch is a three course ‘bistro-style’ meal offering a starter of fruit juice or soup followed by a selection of individual meals offering a variety of hot and cold options (jacket potato with various fillings, side salads selection, sandwiches, complete salad meals, omelette, and daily hot options). The dessert course offers, ice cream, cake which can be taken with custard or fresh fruit.
Evening meal
The evening meal is a three course meal with four hot options (including a vegetarian choice) along with a choice of potatoes or rice and vegetables. The dessert offers a hot pudding with custard, a hot milk pudding, fresh fruit and cheese and biscuits or yoghurt.

At weekends the menu changes slightly, and includes a Sunday Roast, fish and chip supper on Friday and a ‘take away’ theme on Saturday evening alternating between Chinese and Indian foods.

Between meals
A choice of beverages are served between meals, and biscuits are also available if required. For those patients who have been identified as needing extra nutrition as part of their treatment, a higher energy snack is available twice a day in the afternoon and in the evening.
Patients with a small appetite

We screen all our patients on admission for risk of malnutrition. You should expect to be weighed during your hospital stay. If your appetite is poor or you have lost weight unintentionally please inform your nurse. If you are at risk of malnutrition you may be given a red tray at meal times. This helps to alert staff so that they can provide assistance and/or encouragement to eat and they can monitor your food intake.

Please inform your Nurse about your food preferences as we have a number of different menu options to choose from. We can also provide higher energy snacks for patients between meals to provide extra nutrition. You may also be prescribed nutritional supplements – these products provide a concentrated source of nutrition and come in a variety of flavours.

You may be referred to a Dietitian who will be able to provide further advice and information on your specific dietary needs.
Patients who require a special diet

If you follow a special diet for medical, cultural or religious reasons please inform your nurse.

There are a number of additional menus available:

Texture Modified Menus

We have a range of Texture Modified Menus for patients with swallowing problems:

- Texture B (Thin puree)
- Texture C (Thick puree)
- Texture D (Pre mashed)
- Texture E (Fork mashable)

Cultural Menus

We also have Menus to meet certain cultural or religious requirements:

- Kosher Menu
- African Caribbean Menu
- Multi-Cultural Menu (particularly for Sikh, Hindu or Muslim faiths)

And also Menus to meet the needs of some specific medical conditions:

- Gluten Free Menu (No Gluten Containing Ingredients)
- Renal / Low Potassium Menu

If you require a diet which is not covered by the above menus you may be referred to a Dietitian and/or Caterer in order to meet your specific needs.
Food Safety

If you have any food allergies or intolerances, we have information available in the ‘Ward Allergen folder’ for the 14 most common food allergens, this is available to you on request so that you can make appropriate choices from the menu. This information can also be found on the Trust website. If you need to avoid other food allergens which are not listed in this folder, due to a food allergy or food intolerance, you should inform the Ward Housekeeper who will be able to seek advice on appropriate foods from the Patient Catering Team.

Every effort is made to accommodate all food requirements, and in the interests of your safety whilst a patient, the bringing of home cooked food items is strongly discouraged. Please consult a member of staff before requesting a relative or visitor to bring meals in to you as there is usually no re-heating facility.

Missed Meal

If you have missed a meal or have been recently admitted you can request a Missed Meal Menu. This will consist of a selection of fruit juice, sandwich, cake and fresh fruit. Cereals and toast are also available on all wards.
Facilities for Visitors

Visitors and relatives are not usually catered for during your stay, however there are a range of retail outlets available. If your visitors or relatives would like to know what catering facilities are available for them, please ask a member of the ward team.
Feedback

We would welcome feedback on the food or beverage service that you received whilst in hospital. If you would like to give your feedback on this please ask the Ward Housekeeper for our patient satisfaction questionnaire.

Alternatively you can contact us directly by email at:

leedsth-tr.LTH-Patient-Catering@nhs.net