

Managing Malnutrition with Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS)- advice for healthcare professionals

Why Manage Malnutrition?

- In the UK, the cost of disease related malnutrition is estimated to exceed £13 billion, which is approximately double the estimated cost of obesity.
- Malnutrition is most prevalent in the community setting.
- There is extensive evidence, across all health care settings and patient groups, that supports the use of ONS in the management of malnutrition.
- ONS improve nutritional, clinical, and economic outcomes including; improved weight, hand grip strength, energy and protein intakes and reduced hospital admissions, readmissions and complications.
- NICE CG32 (Nutrition Support) has shown substantial cost savings can result from identifying and managing malnutrition, the guideline is ranked 3rd in the top clinical guidelines shown to produce savings.

What are Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS)?

- ONS are classified as Foods For Special Medical Purposes prescribable under BNF section 9.4.2.
- ONS are typically used in addition to the normal diet, when diet alone is insufficient to meet daily nutritional requirements.
- ONS not only increase total energy and protein intake, but also the intake of micronutrients.
- ONS do not reduce intake of normal food.

ACBS indications for prescribing ONS include:

Disease related malnutrition	Inflammatory bowel disease
Short bowel syndrome	Total gastrectomy
Intractable malabsorption	Dysphagia
Pre-operative preparation of undernourished patients	Bowel Fistulae

What types of oral nutritional supplements are available?

ONS come in a range of styles (milk, juice, yogurt, dessert, savoury), formats (liquid, powder, pudding, pre-thickened), types (high protein, fibre-containing, low volume), energy densities (1-2.4kcal/ml) and flavours. They provide energy along with other essential macronutrients and micronutrients. Most people requiring ONS can be managed using standard ONS (1.5-2.4kcal/ml). ONS are often used for people who have dementia, COPD, cancer, or the frail elderly.

Most standard ONS provide – 300kcal, 12g of protein and a full range of vitamins and minerals per serving.

There are a number of different ONS which may be of benefit in specific groups:

- High protein ONS are suitable for individuals with wounds, post-operative patients, some types of cancer, and the elderly.
- Fibre-containing ONS are useful for those with constipation (not suitable for those requiring a fibre-free diet).
- Pre-thickened ONS and puddings are available for individuals with neurological conditions that affect their swallow.
- Small volume high energy dense ONS may aid compliance[#] and may be better tolerated by patients who cannot consume larger volumes.

Who requires ONS?

ONS in addition to food should be considered for patients at high risk of malnutrition. Screening is recommended to identify risk. With the 'Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool' ('MUST') (the most frequently used nutritional screening tool) a score of 2 or more represents high risk. An individual at high risk will have one of the following: a) BMI <18.5 kg/m², b) >10% weight loss over the last 3 - 6 months or, c) >5% weight loss over the last 3-6 months and have a BMI <20 kg/m². When ONS are prescribed, regular monitoring is needed to ensure nutritional requirements are being met, that the products are being taken and that the management is still appropriate.

Supplement Style	Additional Features	Available Products (kcal per serving*)	Flavour Variety	Suitable for Malnourished Individuals with Insufficient Oral Intake...
Milkshake	Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip Bottle (300kcal) Resource Energy (300kcal) Fresubin Energy (300kcal) Ensure Plus (330kcal) Aymes Complete (300kcal) Ensure Plus Advance (330kcal) 	8 6 9 10 4 5	to meet basic energy and nutrient requirements and a preference for milk-based drinks
	Containing Fibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Plus Fibre (310kcal) Resource 2.0 Fibre (400kcal) Fresubin Energy Fibre (300kcal) 	5 6 6	with increased fibre requirements e.g. individuals suffering from constipation (Not suitable for a fibre free diet)
	High Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip Extra (318kcal) Fortisip 2kcal (400kcal) Fresubin Protein Energy (300kcal) Fresubin 2kcal Drink (400kcal) Fresubin 2kcal Fibre Drink (400kcal) 	4 2 5 6 6	with increased protein requirements e.g. elderly, wounds, post-operations, cancer
	Low Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip Compact (300kcal) Ensure Compact (300kcal) Altraplen Compact (300kcal) 	8 3 4	who cannot consume large volumes, may aid compliance and suitable for the majority of patients
	Low Volume / High Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip Compact Protein (300kcal) 	6	
	Low Volume / Fibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip Compact Fibre (300kcal) 	3	
	Powdered (to make up with milk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complan Shake (380kcal)¹ Scandishake Mix (587kcal)² Calshake powder (596kcal)² Ensure Shake (389kcal)¹ Enshake (600kcal)² Fresubin Powder Extra (397kcal)¹ Foodlink Complete (386kcal)¹ AYMES Shake (387kcal)¹ 	5 6 5 4 4 4 5 5	for those who are able to make up their own drinks, consume large volumes and purchase milk (NB: not all powdered supplements contain a full range of vitamins and minerals)
2kcal/ml	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip 2kcal (400kcal) Ensure TwoCal (400kcal) Fresubin 2kcal Drink (400kcal) 	2 4 5	who require a more energy dense ONS	
Juice	Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortijuice (300kcal) Ensure Plus Juice (330kcal) Resource Fruit (254kcal) Fresubin Jucy (300kcal) 	7 6 4 5	with a preference for juice based drinks. Are also suitable for low fat diets and patients with taste fatigue (Not suitable for diabetics)
Yogurt	Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortisip Yogurt Style (300kcal) Ensure Plus Yoghurt Style (330kcal) Fresubin Yocreme (187kcal) 	3 2 4	with a preference for yogurt style drinks
Dessert	Milk Based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forticreme Complete (200kcal) Ensure Plus Crème (175kcal) Resource Dessert Energy (200kcal) Fresubin 2kcal Crème (250kcal) Nutricrem (225kcal) 	4 4 3 5 3	with a preference for cream style desserts
Soup		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Plus Savoury (330kcal) Vitasavoury 300 (375kcal)³ 	1 4	with a preference for savoury flavours

*kcal per serving based on vanilla flavoured supplements. ¹Made with 200ml whole milk ²Made with 240ml whole milk ³Made with 100ml whole milk

A wider range of more specialised supplements including thickening powders and pre-thickened drinks are also available and may require advice from a Dietitian or other HCP. All information correct at time of printing according to MIMS online June 2016.



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#For further information on malnutrition and references please visit: www.malnutritionpathway.co.uk

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