

Prescribing of Sip Feeds (ONS) during COVID-19 in Primary Care in Oxfordshire

Basic Principles:

- Allow plenty of time for GPs to action requests
- Choose products on [OCCG Formulary](#), keep changes to a minimum and set clear treatment goals e.g. weight gain/time period
- Be sensible with quantities requested to ensure equitable access to all patients
- Use Free Sample Services and follow up regarding patient preference before asking the GP for a prescription ([Aymes](#); [Abbott](#) - links to sample services)
- Don't encourage stock piling of nutritional products – prescription should be a maximum of 28 days in line with prescribing guidelines otherwise the supply chain may be compromised
- Avoid waste:
 - Encourage patients to use up any *in date* stock piled items of currently prescribed sip feeds
 - Include in GP letters '*please inform your surgery when you no longer require the sip feed so that they can be removed from the prescription*'

Enteral Feeds

- Keep changes to a minimum
- Acute units should be discharging patients with 14 days supply of feed and ancillaries (if there are stock shortages this may not be the case)
- Send prescription requests marked 'Urgent' quickly to GPs to allow time to process the request (Abbott cannot release the delivery without authorisation/prescription from the GP)

Sip Feeds (ONS)

Continue to encourage using the '[Food First](#)' approach, regular meals, snacks and [nutritious drinks](#).

NB ONS should only be prescribed where there is an *identified clinical need* with a [MUST](#) score of 2 or more.

- **Care/Nursing Homes:** '[Food First](#)' approach or homemade milkshakes initially. If the patient has lost significant weight as a result of contracting COVID-19 and 'Food First' has not helped, then a powdered shake can be prescribed for a predetermined amount of time with clear treatment goals. If a powdered shake is contraindicated (e.g. lactose intolerance) a ready to drink 1.5kcal/ml ONS can be prescribed as above (Aymes Complete, Ensure Plus Milkshake style).
- **Most vulnerable:** (living alone, no carers and a minimal social support network). Use the [OCCG Formulary](#) ready to drink 1.5kcal/ml bottles first line rather than a powdered shake (Aymes Complete or Ensure Plus Milkshake).
- **Vulnerable:** (good social network/access to food shopping and able to make up a powdered shake.) Use a powdered shake and ensure patient knows to make it up with full fat milk and NOT water. If the social situation changes, change to ready to drink bottles rather than powdered shakes.
- **Patients who do not meet the above criteria:** Patients/relatives requesting a supplement when the above criteria are not met should be advised to purchase an OTC product such as Complan[®], Meritene[®] or Nurishment[®]. Pre-made supermarket milkshakes can also be used.
- **Food First:** Skimmed milk and whole milk powder (eg Nido) are available on line from supermarkets and Amazon. Continue to encourage regular 'Food First' suggestions.

Practical Suggestions

Product	Method	Kcal/serving	Protein/serving
Powdered shakes (mixed with whole fresh or UHT milk)			
Aymes Shake	Mix with 200ml whole milk	383	19
Ensure Shake	Mix with 200ml whole milk	389	17
Powdered shakes made up with water (ideally these should be made with whole milk)			
Aymes Shake	Mix with 200ml water	251	12
Ensure Shake	Mix with 200 ml water	252	10
Adding Powdered shakes to fortify food			
Aymes Shake	1 sachet (57g powder)	251	12
Ensure Shake	1 sachet (57 g powder)	252	10

Additional Resource [Helping Older Adults Keep Well](#) – British Dietetic Association Resource