



A patient and visitor guide to  
safe food from home  
brought into Jubilee  
Rehabilitation Unit

Good nutrition and hydration are a vital part of your care while you are undertaking the rehabilitation programme.

The hospital menu provides an extensive range of hot and cold meal and snack options. These include a starter, main course and dessert for both lunch and supper. The main menu offers culturally appropriate meals, and a “small appetite” menu. There is also a menu suitable for those experiencing allergies. In addition there is a “modified texture” menu for those with jaw, dentition and swallowing challenges. The ward host / hostess is able to provide a pictorial menu if this is required. If patients miss a meal due to treatment or test procedures, a light cold meal can be provided.

The Catering Department takes great care to ensure the safety of the food at all stages prior to the point of serving to patients. This is essential to reduce the risk of growth of food-borne pathogens and subsequent food-borne illnesses if unsafe foods are consumed.

The hospital’s catering team follow strict guidelines to ensure the food and drink provided meets the legal hygiene and safety requirements. There are strict mechanisms in place to ensure these controls are met. This involves all the stages of the food journey to the patient, including transportation, storage, preparation, and cooking before serving to the patients.

This includes the temperature of food during transportation to the hospital and storage of the food in the hospital prior to preparation and cooking. The temperature is carefully checked at all stages of the food's journey throughout the hospital. A temperature probe is used to check that the refrigerators are storing food safely, and that each hot meal is cooked to the right temperature to ensure that it is safe to eat before it is served. Meals are individually packed and sealed to avoid food contamination problems.

The hospital cannot ensure food brought into hospital from home has been transported, stored, prepared and cooked to the same level of safety in order to protect patients from harmful effects of food-borne illnesses and for this reason does not recommend patients bring in meals.

## Use of the ward kitchen

Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning. Cross-contamination is when bacteria are spread between food, surfaces or equipment.

To reduce this risk and ensure compliance with food hygiene and safety regulations, patients and visitors are not allowed to enter or use the ward kitchens.

Patients are more vulnerable to infection and are more likely to suffer from food poisoning when they are unwell, recovering from surgery and especially when they are immune-compromised.



## Jubilee Rehabilitation Services

The rehabilitation programme is to help you to manage your pain and increase your independence. The hospital food meets the legal hygiene and safety requirements. As the safety of food brought into hospital cannot be ensured it is not recommended.

Should you wish to bring in any food into hospital you will need to be able to independently manage this yourself. Staff on the ward are not trained to be able to support you.

We recognise that you may already experience dietary issues related to your condition.

If you need to discuss your dietary preferences with the nursing staff please do this prior to your admission. Contact a member of the ward management team or discuss by telephone with the nursing team.

Should the nursing staff feel you need to see a dietitian, you will be seen by the senior nurse in the first instance. They will then decide if referral is needed.

There is a small communal microwave and fridge for your use during your admission.

Any medications requiring refrigeration will be stored separately for you by the nursing staff.

## Foods requiring chilling

Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing. Some food needs to be kept chilled to keep it safe to eat, e.g. food with a 'use by' date, cooked dishes and other ready-to-eat food such as prepared salads and desserts.

It is very important not to leave these types of food 'standing around' at room temperature.

Cold food should be kept at 8°C or below in a cool ventilated place. Fridges should be set at 5 °C or lower.

All chilled food should not be kept out of the fridge for any length of time. The safety of chilled foods brought into hospital by visitors and patients cannot be guaranteed and for these reasons are not recommended.

If you choose to bring in items requiring chilling please ensure you have:

- Transported chilled items in a cool box
- All food and drink stored in the communal fridge is dated and labelled with your name. Labels are available from the nursing team
- Because there is limited space available, no large containers can be accommodated within the fridge
- Jubilee staff will remove and dispose of all items from the fridge on each Friday, so please ensure that you take home any unused items before you leave.



## Cooked foods

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria in food.

It is extremely important to make sure that food is cooked properly all the way through.

Therefore, bringing in food which should be eaten hot is discouraged as it cannot be reheated by any staff on the unit. This includes any 'take away' meals brought into the hospital.

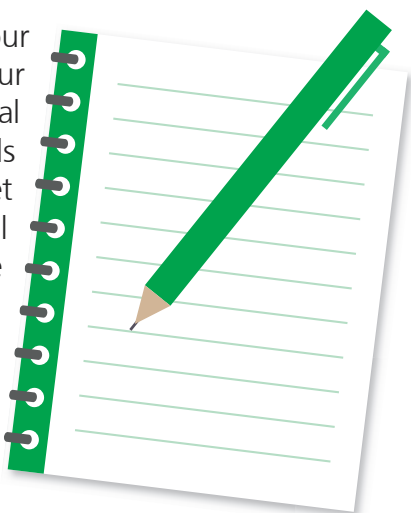
Hot food should be kept at a minimum of  $63^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and is carefully regulated by the ward host for meals supplied by the hospital.

This is difficult to achieve for food transported from outside the hospital. As the safety of food brought into hospital cannot be guaranteed it is not recommended.



## A guide to suitable foods brought in to Jubilee Rehabilitation Unit by patients and visitors

We understand that as part of your admission you may need to increase your dietary intake to help you meet the physical needs of the programme. The meals provided by the catering department meet the requirements of the general population. The portions may seem to be different to the amounts you eat at home. Snacks between your meals may help you to keep up your energy levels and sustain you to meet the physical demands of the programme. There are a limited range of snack items available from the catering team.



Bring in only small amounts of food or drinks which are tempting and easy for you to eat without utensils.

Sealed items with a long life, in small individual portions **not requiring chilling, preparation and cooking are the most suitable** and easiest for you to manage.

Any items brought in should be ready prepared and labelled with your name and date of expiry.

The following list includes suggestions and comments that other patients have found helpful during their rehabilitation and may help you to plan for your admission.

### **Drinks**

Choose individual long-life drinks in bottles, cartons or cans such as milkshakes, fruit and vegetable juices, fizzy drinks, squash and water.

Any special milk e.g. oat, almond, and hazelnut milk, if you require these.

A supply of any favourite decaffeinated tea and coffee, hot chocolate and fruit tea bags you particularly enjoy. These may help to keep you relaxed and comfortable during your admission.

### **Fruit**

Choose fresh fruit washed and prepared ready to eat. Small sealed packets of dried or fresh fruit may be a suitable option.

### **Sweet and savoury snacks**

Choose individually wrapped and sealed packets of sweet and savoury biscuits, crackers, crisps, nuts, seeds, cakes, cereal bars, instant noodles, couscous, long-life salami sticks or long-life desserts.



## Remember

Once opened, all long-life products should be treated as fresh produce. Please follow the storage instructions on the food packaging once open.

(Guidance has been taken from the Food Standards Agency 2014)  
<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/homehygiene/Pages/Homehygienehub.aspx>

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If you have any comments about this leaflet or would like it translated into another language/large print, please contact the Clinical Governance Department on 020 8909 5439/5717.

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