

Oral Nutrition Supplements

What are Oral Nutrition Supplements?

- Oral nutrition supplements (ONS) **provide additional nutrients, including protein and energy** for people who are not meeting their nutrition needs through food alone. This may be due to poor appetite, reduced food intake, increase in nutrition needs or poor absorption of nutrients due to illness.
- ONS are typically **used in addition to your usual diet**, however, some ONS can be used to provide all your nutrition needs for the day if required.
- ONS are **available as ready-to-drink liquids** (milk-style or juice-style), **powder** to add to meals, or **dessert-style puddings**.



What benefits will I get from using ONS?

- 1** The additional nutrition provided by **ONS can help you achieve your daily nutrition needs**, particularly when you are unwell and your body requires more nutrition than normal.
- 2** **ONS can help to prevent and treat malnutrition**, which occurs when a person consumes insufficient energy (calories) and/or protein.¹
- 3** Malnutrition can lead to **poor immunity, loss of strength, increased risk of falls and reduced quality of life**.^{1,2}

What to discuss with your dietitian



- The amount and frequency to take the ONS.
- The different ONS flavors and types to ensure your personal taste and preferences are considered.
- Any relevant food allergies and/or intolerances.
- It is important to be in contact with your dietitian on a regular basis so they can monitor and review your progress. Let them know if you have any changes in your medical condition, appetite, food intake and weight.

References

1. Gomez G, Botero-Rodriguez F, Misas JD, et al. A nutritionally focused program for community-living older adults resulted in improved health and well-being. *Clin Nutr*. 2022 Jul; 41(7):1549-1556.
2. Tappenden KA, Quatrara B, Parkhurst ML, et al. Critical role of nutrition in improving quality of care: an interdisciplinary call to action to address adult hospital malnutrition. *JPEN J Parenter Enteral Nutr*. 2013 Jul;37(4):482-97.

How do I take ONS?



The amount of ONS you need depends on your individual needs and current food intake. A dietitian can guide you on timing and how much you should consume.



To avoid flavor fatigue, a range of different ONS flavors and styles should be incorporated into your routine.



Some ONS can be consumed chilled, frozen, heated or in a recipe for variety.



Ready-to-drink liquids can be consumed between meals or sipped throughout the day.



Ready-to-eat pudding-style ONS can be enjoyed as a snack or for dessert.