

## Patient Preference

You will be offered a choice of meal and may also choose the portion size. Where possible, we will cater for your ethnic, religious, cultural and personal preferences. There is a multi-lingual pictorial menu available if you require same.

## Special Diets

You may not be given the same food as other patients are given in your ward. This may be because you are on a special diet. Please do not hesitate to speak to a staff member if you have any queries or if you wish to clarify something.

### Staff responsible for ensuring that your nutrition and hydration requirements are met

**Catering Staff** – prepare, cook, plate and serve fresh meals each day. Catering Staff ensure that patients have fresh water throughout the day and on request.

**Nurses/Midwives** – screen patients (adult general wards only) for nutritional status, within 24 hours of admission and weekly thereafter, using a screening tool called MUST; develop care plans and, if required, refer patients to a Dietitian and/or to the Speech & Language Therapist; inform Catering of any dietary requirements; assist with feeding if required; monitor, evaluate & record nutrition & hydration intake; administer prescribed nutritional assistance when patients are unable to maintain adequate oral nutrition & hydration.

**Healthcare Assistants** - prepare the diet lists for the Catering Staff; assist with feeding, if required; weigh patients; provide drinks, as required; observe diet intake; record intake & output and thicken fluids as appropriate.

**Dietitians** – assess patients' nutritional status and needs; recommend appropriate diets; recommend food fortification and oral nutritional supplements, if required and liaise with Catering Staff regarding dietary needs.

**Speech & Language Therapist** – assesses patients with swallowing difficulties and recommends modification of food textures or fluid consistencies; provides guidelines on safe swallowing and/or provides rehabilitation for patients with swallowing difficulties.

**Occupational Therapist** – assesses patients' functional and cognitive abilities; recommends adaptive aids or environmental modifications to support patients to consume their nutrition/fluids and provides advice on appropriate seating systems which can enhance nutrition/fluid intake.

**Doctors** – recommend referral of patients to the Dietitian; the Occupational Therapist and referral of patients with swallowing difficulties to the Speech & Language Therapist and prescribe appropriate nutrition when patients are unable to maintain adequate oral nutrition.

## Allergies

Please inform Nursing/Midwifery Staff if you have an allergy to any food(s).



## Patient Information Leaflet in relation to Food, Nutrition & Hydration

Midland Regional Hospital  
Portlaoise



Version 4 (July, 2024)  
Contact Details: QPS Department – 057 86 96043

## Background

All staff at the Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise recognises that the provision of nutritious food and adequate fluids is an integral and important part of your treatment and care.

This leaflet was developed to inform you and your relatives how the hospital endeavours to ensure that your nutrition and hydration requirements are met.

## Welcome Message

We know that you would prefer to be at home. However, at the moment, as it is necessary for you to spend some time in hospital, we want to make your stay as comfortable as possible.

We will endeavour to meet, as far as possible, your needs and preferences in respect of the provision of food.

Please let a member of staff know what we can do to make your stay more comfortable.

## Patient Feedback

We welcome your feedback regarding any aspect of your care.

Tell a member of staff; complete a *Your Service Your Say* feedback form or write to the Quality & Patient Safety Department.

Visitors are reminded not to bring cooked food or food that requires heating/reheating into patients in the hospital.

## Meal & Snack Times

### Adult (including Maternity Services) and Paediatric Ward

Breakfast	7.30 a.m. (9.00 a.m. Paediatric Unit)
Snacks	10.00-10.30 a.m.
Lunch	12:30 p.m.
Snacks	2.00-2.30 p.m.
Evening Meal	4.30 p.m.
Night Teas	From 6.30 p.m.

## Making Mealtimes Matter

The hospital advocates a making Mealtimes Matter policy.

The policy endeavours to ensure that mealtimes are free from avoidable and unnecessary interruptions wherever possible. This will enable the team to focus ward activity on the service of food and providing patients with support at mealtimes. Visitors, with prior arrangement with Nurse/Midwife Manager, are welcome to stay during mealtimes to help relatives or friends with their meals.

## Assistance at Meal-Times

Please inform a member of staff if you require assistance at meal-times or if you would like a relative/friend to assist you at meal-times.

## Food First

If you are unable to meet your daily nutritional requirements with the regular hospital diet we will endeavour to meet your requirements with a food first approach. It is important to make sure that the food you eat is as nourishing as possible when your appetite is poor or when you are finding it difficult to maintain your weight. We encourage little and often and we may fortify your main meals. Sometimes the Dietitian might recommend that you take an oral nutritional supplement. The Dietitian will recommend a supplement to suit your needs.

## Textured Modified Diets or Thickened Fluids

If you have swallowing difficulties you may be referred for assessment to the Speech & Language Therapist. The Speech & Language Therapist may recommend that you be given textured modified diets or thickened fluids.

## Fluids

You will be given fluids throughout the day. Please let a member of staff know if you require a refill.

## Missed Meals/ Outside of Meal Times/During the Night

Please inform a member of staff if you have missed a meal and/or would like any food/snacks outside of meal times or during the night.