

Quick Reference Guide to Prescribing Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) For Adults in Primary Care

This guide provides information on formulary ONS and circumstances in which products other than first line choices may be clinically justified.

OVER THE COUNTER PRODUCTS TO SUGGEST WHEN PRESCRIBING IS NOT CLINICALLY JUSTIFIED BUT THERE IS PATIENT DEMAND

Complan[®], Complan[®] Soup, Complan[®] Smoothie, Complan[®] Milkshake, Meritene[®] Energis Nurishment[®] Original, Nurishment[®] Extra, Nurishment[®] Active

The 6 steps to appropriate prescribing of ONS in adults should be followed and food fortification advice offered for all patients prescribed ONS.

HOW MUCH PRODUCT SHOULD I PRESCRIBE?

To be clinically effective **prescribe ONS twice daily**. This ensures that calorie and protein intake is sufficient to achieve weight gain. An initial one week supply or starter pack should be prescribed to test acceptability and tolerance.

The products listed below represent the most cost effective choices.

FIRST LINE POWDERED PRESCRIBABLE ONS

AYMES[®] Shake - 1 box of 7 x 57g sachets each mixed with 200mls full fat milk. Available in 5 flavours: strawberry, vanilla, banana, chocolate and neutral.

Starter pack available giving 1 sachet of each flavour and a shaker (prescribe only once to establish flavour preference – do NOT add to repeat template).

AYMES[®] Shake can be mixed with 100ml of full fat milk if a 'compact style' ONS is required.

SECOND LINE PRESCRIBABLE ONS

AYMES[®] Complete 200ml bottle or Ensure[®] Plus 220ml bottle when patient is lactose intolerant or cannot make up a shake. AYMES[®] Complete available in 4 flavours: vanilla, strawberry, chocolate and banana. Ensure[®] Plus available in 10 flavours: chocolate, strawberry, vanilla, fruits of the forest, banana, raspberry, orange, coffee, peach or neutral.

Ensure[®] Compact - 125ml bottle when patient is lactose intolerant AND requires small volume

Ensure[®] Compact available in 4 flavours: strawberry, banana, café latte and vanilla.

Fresubin[®] 2kcal - 200ml bottle when a patient has high protein requirements e.g. for wound healing

Available in 6 flavours: vanilla, toffee, apricot-peach, cappuccino, fruits of the forest and neutral.

THIRD LINE JUICE STYLE ONS TO PRESCRIBE IF MILKSHAKE STYLE ONS ARE NOT SUITABLE

Ensure[®] Plus Juice - 220ml bottle available in 6 flavours: orange, apple, lemon and lime, strawberry, peach and fruit punch.

N.B. Juice style ONS are not recommended for patients with diabetes.

ALL OTHER ONS SHOULD NOT ROUTINELY BE INITIATED IN PRIMARY CARE AND SHOULD ONLY BE PRESCRIBED WHEN CLINICALLY JUSTIFIED BY A REQUESTING DIETITIAN

The reason these are not formulary products could be that they are:

- low calorie ie. 1kcal/ml and not cost effective eg. Ensure[®] cans, Fresubin[®] original
- modular ONS which do not provide a balance of nutrients eg. Calogen[®], Fresubin[®] 5kcal
- specialist products eg. for patients with renal disease, metabolic disorders, dysphagia, GI disorders
- puddings and savoury/soup style as it should usually be possible for homemade products to be fortified
- less cost effective than formulary products

[See full guideline for prices and nutritional comparison of formulary products.](#)

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