

Neonatology

Food for parents on the neonatal unit

Information for parents

We want to encourage you to spend as much time on the neonatal unit with your baby as possible, but we know it can be hard as you also need to eat and drink. This information sheet details food options available to support you to stay on the unit with your baby for longer.

Where should I go to get food and drink?

The parent's sitting room/kitchen. Please ask a member of staff if you need help finding it. This is where you can help yourself at any time to:

- Tea, coffee and milk
- Breakfast cereals, such as cornflakes or Weetabix
- Popcorn
- Oven-baked crisps and vegetable crisps
- Cereal bars or protein bars
- Dried fruit
- Cup soup
- Instant noodles or instant rice
- Baked beans and tinned fruit are also usually available

There is a fridge where you can store food and a microwave you can use. Please clearly label all your food. There are also water fountains where you can get a drink or fill up your water bottles.

Please do not bring food or hot drinks into the babies' nurseries for safety and infection control.

Lunches

Packed lunches, also known as snack boxes, are delivered to the unit before lunch time every day and kept in the parent sitting room on the side or in the fridge. We have a limited amount of these each day, so these are prioritised for breastfeeding and/or expressing mothers. Please help yourself.

These lunches include:

- a sandwich
- fruit juice
- biscuits
- cake
- crackers with spread / cheese
- yoghurt
- fruit

Do I need to pay for food and drink?

No, you don't need to pay for any of the food and drink listed above. It is paid for by the kind donations to our charity Cosmic (cosmiccharity.org.uk), which was set up to support the children's and neonatal intensive care units at St Mary's & Queen Charlotte's Hospital.

What should I do if I have food intolerances?

If we can't meet your dietary requirements with food and drink available in the unit, we can direct you to the nearest supermarket or cafe.

If you have any queries about the foods available, please do not hesitate to ask the neonatal dietitian or your nurse (there will always be a nurse with the babies).

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at pals@imperial.nhs.uk. The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to express your concerns in **writing** to:

Chief executive - complaints
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
Trust Headquarters
The Bays, South Wharf Road
London W2 1NY

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print, as a sound recording, in Braille, or in alternative languages. Please contact the communications team on **020 3312 5592**.