

## Prescribing Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) Quick Reference Guide

### STEP 1: Assess nutritional risk

<b>BMI</b>	<b>Weight loss</b> (in past 3-6months)	<b>Acute illness</b> AND has had or likely to be no nutritional intake for more than 5 days, score 2
>20 score 0	<5% score 0	
18.5-20 score 1	5-10% score 1	
<18.5 score 2	>10% score 2	
Total score 0 to 6		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MUST score 0</b> <b>Low risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider dietary advice if needed.</li> <li>Consider <a href="#">Step 2</a> to prevent potential malnutrition.</li> <li>Re-check MUST annually, or monthly if in care home.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MUST score 1</b> <b>Medium risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow <a href="#">Steps 2, 3 and 4</a></li> <li>If ONS is considered, advise OTC purchase.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MUST score 2 or more</b> <b>High risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to dietician</li> <li>Follow <a href="#">Steps 2, 3, 4 and 5</a></li> <li>Check ACBS criteria (below) before considering ONS in the interim.</li> </ul>

### STEP 2: Assess cause of (or potential for) malnutrition (examples below)

- Ability to chew, dental or swallowing issues
- Impact of medication
- Physical disability, impairment or symptoms e.g. pain, vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea
- Medical prognosis
- Environmental and social issues
- Psychological issues
- Substance or alcohol misuse

### STEP 3: Set treatment goal (examples below)

- Target weight or target weight gain or target BMI over a period of time
- Wound or pressure ulcer healing if relevant
- Reduced infections
- Weight maintenance where weight gain is unrealistic or undesirable
- Falls prevention or improved activities of daily living

### STEP 4: Offer Food First Advice

- Increase calories and protein in everyday foods
- Assess progress and review in one month
- Care home** should provide fortified food, snacks, homemade milkshakes/smoothies. Use fortifying food care plan.

### STEP 5: Prescribing ONS

- Consider if MUST score  $\geq 2$
- Check patient meets **ACBS criteria** (If ACBS criteria not met then suggest homemade food/drinks or buy ONS over the counter)
- Follow the [Kent and Medway Guidelines for prescribing ONS in adults](#) and the recommended products list.  
**1<sup>st</sup> line – powdered products**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> line – oral sip feeds**
- ONS should be prescribed twice daily
- For sip feeds initiate with starter packs to identify preferences and any intolerances.
- Prescribe as acute prescription. Avoid adding to repeat template unless a reminder is added to review the patient.
- Continue to encourage dietary intake.
- Ensure review date/reminder and care plan are in place. Ideally review within 3 months.

### STEP 6: Reviewing and deprescribing ONS

- Ideally review within 3 months of initiation
- This should form part of the general medication review for the patient.
- Check the ONS care plan and individualised target.
- Recalculate MUST score if needed.
- Revisit dietary advice.
- Remove ONS product from repeat.
- If ONS should continue,
  - Ensure ACBS criteria still met
  - Check there is a review date/reminder for patient.

#### ACBS criteria:

- Short bowel syndrome ▪Intractable malabsorption
- Pre-operative preparation of undernourished patients ▪Proven IBD ▪Post-total gastrectomy
- Dysphagia ▪Bowel fistulae ▪Disease related malnutrition