

Infection prevention and control/catering department
**Bringing food and drink into hospital:
information for patients, carers and
relatives**

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.



Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



The Christie provides a variety of high quality, safe and nutritious food and drinks to patients in hospital. Great care is taken to provide food which is right for the needs of individual patients.

Choices suitable for all special dietary requirements are available, whether medical, religious, conscientious or personal. Diet is part of the essential care of the patient. If it is not right the patient may recover less quickly.

Drinks and snacks are freely available and there is generally no reason for extra food to be brought in. However, if patients or their relatives/friends do wish to supplement the hospital diet with additional items, it is essential that they follow the simple rules listed below.

If a patient's condition permits, any of the items of food or drink below may be brought in and kept in the bedside locker. All food must be kept covered and preferably stored within an airtight container to prevent contamination from the environment.

Always check with nursing staff what food and drink the patient is allowed. For example consider that:

- patients may have swallowing difficulties and need a specially prepared diet
- patients with diabetes may not be allowed sugary foods/drinks
- patients may not be allowed to eat or drink at all e.g. before going to theatre or other procedures

Types of food permitted to bring in to hospital:

- biscuits.
- individually-wrapped cakes or cereal bars.
- sweets/chocolate/crisps.
- fruit squash/cordials/mineral water/flavoured water.
- individual cartons/cans of juice or fizzy drinks, which do not need to be kept in a fridge.
- fresh fruit which has been washed.

Make sure that any fresh fruit is provided in small quantities, which can be consumed within 24 hours to ensure freshness and avoid bruised or mouldy items.

The patient or relative is responsible for checking the **use by dates** or **best before dates** before eating these items

In the interest of patient safety and comfort, we do not:

- permit hot food to be brought in for patients
- permit protein items e.g. sandwiches, cream cakes etc.
- permit nuts, nuts or nut products to be brought onto the ward as this may cause an allergic reaction
- provide refrigerated storage for food and drink brought-in
- re-heat or keep warm brought-in foods
- accept any responsibility for untoward effects resulting from eating or drinking brought-in items
- permit visitors to eat and drink on the ward.

Infection prevention and control team: 0161 446 3731