

Food and drink for children/teenagers who are immunocompromised

These guidelines should be followed throughout treatment, whether at home or in hospital, to minimise the risk of food-related infection.

Basic food hygiene

- Wash hands thoroughly with hot soapy water before preparing or eating food.
- Tea towels must be washed at high temperatures, changed regularly and properly dried before use.
- Keep pets away from food, dishes and work surfaces.
- Keep your kitchen clean. Wipe kitchen work surfaces with hot soapy water before preparing food. Remember to keep your cooker, microwave and fridge clean, inside and out.

Storing food and drink

- Check that your fridge is at the correct temperature. This should be between 0°C and 5°C.
- Take chilled and frozen food home and put away quickly. Frozen food that has defrosted must not be refrozen.
- Prepare and store raw and cooked foods separately, keep raw meat and fish at the bottom of your refrigerator away from cooked food.

Preparing food and drink

- Always wash your hands, work surfaces and utensils, between handling raw and cooked food.
- Check the best before and use by dates on all products. Use food and drink within the recommended date.
- All food must be thoroughly cooked. Follow package cooking instructions carefully.
- Serve cooked food immediately.
- Keep hot food hot and cold food cold – don't leave it standing around.
- Food heated or cooked in a saucepan or microwave should be thoroughly heated until piping hot. Stir food during cooking to make sure that it is properly heated through.

Reheating food

- Avoid reheating home cooked food. Ready meals are acceptable if correctly stored and reheated.
- Freshly cooked food can be allowed to cool and then frozen straight away. It can then be thawed and thoroughly re-heated once. Do not reheat left overs of anything.

Take aways

- These should be cooked fresh, collected and eaten immediately. Do not reheat left overs – throw them away.

BBQ's

- Particular care is required when cooking chicken and sausages. All food that is cooked on a BBQ should be cooked thoroughly.

Foods your child should not eat

- Live bacteria bio yoghurts or yoghurt drinks such as Actimel or Yakult
- Unpasteurised foods
- Raw eggs or foods that contain raw eggs such as homemade mayonnaise and ice-cream
- Camembert, Brie, Danish blue or Stilton cheeses
- Paté
- Honey
- Ice-cream from ice-cream machines at fast food outlets, vans or shops
- Raw meat or fish including rare steaks or sushi
- Kebabs
- Pre-washed or prepared salads.

You should

- Only use eggs with the lion mark on
- Only eat individually wrapped ice creams, not ice cream from large tubs or machines such as Mr Whippy
- Carefully wash or peel fruit and vegetables, including salad
- Make sure all foods are thoroughly cooked, especially meat and fish.

Drinking water

Rarely there can be outbreaks of a bug called cryptosporidium in water supplies. This causes severe diarrhoea in people receiving chemotherapy. Guidance from the government has suggested that all people who are immunocompromised should only drink water that has been boiled and allowed to cool. Even if you buy bottled water you should still boil and cool it.

- Cooled boiled water should be kept refrigerated and any unused water discarded after 24 hours.
- To avoid having to regularly boil and cool water on the ward, we have a specially fitted filter on the tap. This cannot be purchased for home use.
- You should **not** use home filter jugs.

Please speak to your doctor, nurse or community nurse if you have any questions.