

# Position Statement on the Prescription of Dessert-style Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS)



Bath and North East Somerset,  
Swindon and Wiltshire Together

**BSW ICB does NOT support routine prescribing of dessert-style ONS**

## Recommendations:

- ✓ Dessert-style ONS should not be routinely initiated in primary care. This includes:
  - × Aymes Actacal Crème
  - × Aymes Actasolve Delight
  - × Energieshake Dessert
  - × Ensure Plus Crème
  - × Forticreme Complete
  - × Fresubin 2kcal Crème
  - × Fresubin Yocreme
  - × Nutricrem
- ✓ They should only be prescribed if the following apply:
  - ✓ The patient has been assessed as being at high risk of malnutrition using the MUST screening tool **AND**
  - ✓ Has been assessed by a Speech and Language therapist as having dysphagia and therefore more cost effective ONS may not be appropriate **AND**
  - ✓ They have been recommended by a dietitian with clear justification and a plan for monitoring in place.

## Rationale:

- The annual spend on dessert-style ONS across BSW is high, with a total spend of over £250k between January 2023 and December 2023.
- The nutritional content of dessert-style ONS can easily be replicated by food and there are a wide range of products with equivalent calorie and protein content available to purchase over the counter.
- A substantial proportion of dessert style ONS are currently prescribed in care homes. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) requires that care homes provide adequate nutrition and hydration for service users as per the Health and Social Care Act 2008, Regulation 14: Meeting nutritional and hydration needs. Therefore, a Food First approach should be adopted in care homes to provide adequately fortified foods and nourishing snacks, as well as homemade fortified milkshakes where appropriate.
- For patients meeting ACBS criteria for prescription of ONS, powdered and liquid options are more cost-effective and have a higher nutrient content as shown below\*:

Product	Energy per serving (kcal)	Protein per serving (g)	Cost per serving	Cost per 100kcal
Nualtra Nutricrem®	225	12.5	£2.21	£0.98
<b>Powdered ONS</b>				
Foodlink Complete®	383	19.2	£0.58	£0.15
<b>Ready to drink ONS (for those unable to prepare a powdered option)</b>				
Altraplen Energy®	300	12	£0.99	£0.33

\*ACBS Prices correct as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Please refer to BSW formulary for full guidance on first line options when prescribing ONS [Formulary\(bswformulary.nhs.uk\)](https://www.bswformulary.nhs.uk)

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### Shop-bought alternatives to dessert-style ONS

Below are some examples of shop-bought puddings that are convenient and provide a comparable energy and protein content to that of dessert-style ONS. If one high-energy and one high-protein option are taken daily, this provides an average of 452kcal and 23.5g protein.

Pudding	Energy per serving (kcal)	Protein per serving (g)
<b>High Energy Pudding Options</b>		
Creamy Rice pudding	225	4.5
Sponge pudding, various flavours	392	4.4
Crumble (individual pots or serving from whole dessert)	279	3.2
Sticky toffee pudding	348	3.2
Gu cheesecake pot (lemon)	328	3.3
Trifle (individual pot)	156	2.2
Cadburys sticky chocolate pudding	360	3.8
<b>Average</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>High Protein Pudding Options</b>		
Fage 5% total Greek yoghurt (200g serving)	186	18
Ehrmann high protein mousse (choc/hazel/vanilla flavours)	156	20
Brooklea chocolate protein pudding	159	20
Protein yoghurt (individual pot 150-200g)	125	17
Plain Brooklea protein yoghurt (serving from large pot)	144	25
<b>Average</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>20</b>

\* Nutritional values are taken as an average across various brands unless a particular brand is stated

### Further information

Further 'Food First' information and recipe ideas for creating nutrient dense puddings can be found here;

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/creating-a-fortified-diet-for-caterers-recipe-booklet-20.pdf>

[Food First/Food Enrichment \(bapen.org.uk\)](https://www.bapen.org.uk/)

[Food first advice for improving nutrition.pdf](#)

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