

Why and when should oral nutritional supplements (ONS) be considered for a patient?

6 key points from Episode 1 with Dr Carrie Ruxton

01

ONS are a significant investment for the NHS, but can have a big impact on patients. Their use needs to be targeted and mindful to optimise compliance, however, they are not meal replacements.

02

Malnutrition statistics

Malnutrition affects 1 in 20 adults in England, with an estimated cost of 19.6 billion and 30% of hospital admissions related to malnutrition. This "carousel of malnutrition" has massive implications for patients and the NHS.¹

03

Who needs ONS?

ONS are indicated for a wide range of clinical conditions, including gastrointestinal, malabsorptive and neurological diseases. They can also be used pre and post-operatively, in patients who are at risk of disease-related malnutrition and in eating disorders where appropriate.

04

How to assess your patient

Assess malnutrition risk using local guidance - the MUST tool is often used. Identify nutritional needs and the nutritional deficit to help define clear goals of treatment with your patient.

05

Why are ONS used?

For patients who cannot meet their nutritional requirements using diet alone. If a food first approach hasn't been effective then consider adding in ONS - ideally initiate a minimum of two daily for benefit.

06

How often & how long should ONS be used for?

It's important to set targets for your patients (weight, food intake, mobility etc.) and review them regularly to ensure the intended benefit of the ONS is being achieved. By doing this we can also ensure value for money for the NHS.



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