

Quick Reference Guide: Six steps to appropriate management of unintentional weight loss in adults and the appropriate prescribing of oral nutritional supplements (ONS) for adults in primary care.



<p>STEP 1: Identification of nutritional risk</p>	<p>The following criteria identify those who are malnourished or at nutritional risk (NICE Guidelines (CG32) Nutritional Support in Adults):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) score of 2 or more • Body Mass Index (BMI) <18.5kg/m² • Unintentional weight loss >10% in the past 3-6 months • BMI <20kg/m² and an unintentional weight loss >5% in past 3-6 months • Those who have eaten little or nothing for >5 days • Those who have poor absorptive capacity or high nutrient losses
<p>STEP 2: Nutritional assessment</p>	<p>Assess underlying causes of malnutrition and consider availability of adequate diet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to chew and swallowing issues • Impact of medication • Physical symptoms (i.e. vomiting, pain, GI symptoms) • Medical prognosis • Environmental and social issues • Psychological issues • Substance/alcohol misuse <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <p>Review treatment plan and refer to appropriate local services</p> </div>
<p>STEP 3: Set goals</p>	<p>Agree goals and document realistic, measurable treatment aims e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to maintain or gain weight • Consider wound healing/pressure sores/physical appearance/strength
<p>STEP 4: Offer 'Food First' advice</p>	<p>Give food first dietary advice – encourage 3 small meals and 3 snacks daily. Aim for 2 nourishing drinks per day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High calorie, high protein dietary advice, homemade nourishing drinks. Provide leaflet: 'Eat Well, Keep Well'. <p>Over the counter products purchased by patient: e.g. Complan®, Meritene®Energis (formerly Build-Up).</p>
<p>STEP 5: Refer to dietitian and/or prescribe ONS (exception is urgent cases)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If 'Food First' has failed to improve nutritional intake or functional status after one month refer to dietitian (sooner if rapid weight loss despite food fortification) and/or consider prescribing ONS. • In exceptional urgent cases prescribe first line community ONS twice daily whilst awaiting dietetic referral, if the patient meets ACBS prescribing criteria: <i>Short bowel syndrome, intractable malabsorption, pre-operative preparation of patients who are undernourished, proven inflammatory bowel, following total gastrectomy, dysphagia, bowel fistulas, disease-related malnutrition</i> • Specify dosage, timing and length of treatment <p>First line products: Choose the most cost-effective option. Products include: AYMES® Shake, Complan Shake®, Ensure® Shake, Foodlink Complete, Fresubin® Powder Extra,.</p>
<p>STEP 6: Review and discontinue of ONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review at least every 3 months to monitor, set goals and assess continued need for ONS. • When goals of treatment are met discontinue ONS. • If the patient no longer has clinical need or no longer meets ACBS criteria but wishes to continue ONS, recommend over the counter supplements or homemade fortified drinks as in Step 4.