

Recommendation regarding bringing food/meals from home – Information for the patient

The Radboud university medical center focuses a great deal on safe and healthy food. In this hospital, you will receive food and drink that contribute to a speedy recovery in line with the FoodforCare concept. www.radboudumc.nl/foodforcare. The food selections in this ward is very diverse, so please contact the dietary assistant in the ward about the exact offerings.

Strict rules and regulations in relation to hygiene and food safety apply to the provision of food in our hospital. The rules and regulations are legally binding and are in place to ensure that the food does not make you, the patient, unwell.

Bringing in hot food is not recommended. There is a good chance of that it will spoil. The risk of food poisoning is even greater in people with weakened immune systems.

If you do want to bring in food/meals from home, the following rules apply:

Talk to your doctor or nurse about the options:

- The ward that you are in should have the facilities to store a meal from home correctly (a separate patient fridge and microwave).
- Before you bring the food/meal from home, always check with your doctor to see whether it is sensible to have this food in the hospital, and whether you need to take anything into consideration, such as a special diet, modified food thickness, or other limitations (such as preparations for an examination and interactions with medication). Keep your family and visitors informed of these matters as well.

Regulations regarding bringing food from home:

Beforehand:

- Some foods spoil quickly and are best left at home. High-risk products are: soup, meat and cold meats, fish, salad, fruit, and dairy products. We recommend to bring (or request) as few of these items from home as possible. Pre-packaged foods that do not need to be refrigerated have the lowest risk, such as cake, salty snacks, and nuts.
- Take note of the general hygiene guidelines when preparing meals.
 - Always wash your hands before preparing food;
 - Prevent cross-contamination by using separate kitchen utensils for raw and cooked products;
 - Thoroughly cook meats, fish, chicken, and eggs;
 - Do not use products past their sell-by or use-by date;
 - Quickly cool prepared products and then place them in the refrigerator.
- Always store the home-cooked meal in your fridge until the moment of the visit.
- Wrap the meal properly.
- Label the meal with the name and date of birth of the patient, the date on which it was prepared, and the use-by date (max 24 hours after preparation).
- Transport the meal(s) cooled in an insulated box or bag with cooling elements.
- Food that is not supplied by the hospital should preferably be used immediately or stored in

the “patient fridge”.

Outside foods brought into the ward:

- Be sure that the food/meal brought in from home is used right away or is immediately put into the patient fridge.
- When you put the product into the ward refrigerator, it needs to be labeled with a name and date of birth of the patient, the date on which it was prepared, and the use-by date (max 24 hours after preparation).
- Label stickers can be found near the ward refrigerator.
- The meals can only be eaten by the patient specified on the label.
- Any potential reheating of the food must be done by an employee of the hospital in the designated patient microwave.
- If the use-by date has passed (max 24 hours), the meal will be removed from the fridge by the dietary assistant.
- Unlabeled, incorrectly labeled, or incorrectly covered meals will also be removed.
- Unopened boxes/bottles have a shelf life of three days (72 hours), if refrigerated and properly closed.
- After opening any packaging, a label sticker that includes the date of opening and the use-by date must be attached.

Final notes

The patient is personally responsible when having meals from outside of the hospital. The Radboud university medical center is not liable for food/meals brought in from home.

Questions

If you have any questions about the content of this pamphlet, please speak with the dietary assistant in your ward.

We thank you for your cooperation.