

Prescribing Advice: Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) for patients requiring thickened fluids and oral nutritional support

- **All oral fluids** must be the recommended consistency when thickener recommended, including ONS.
- Most powdered and liquid ONS do not thicken well/at all, forming an unsafe, unpleasant and lumpy consistency.
- Some ONS occur in a naturally thick state while others are formulated for dysphagia management and do not require thickener to be added. However, some ONS marketed as Stage 1 or Stage 2 consistency are not suitable at present: Nutilis Complete Stage 2¹, Fresubin Thickened Stage 1², Fresubin Stage 2³. Use these only with Speech & Language Therapist (SLT) and Dietitian input, based on individual patient assessment.
- Products with added thickener tend to be variable and can change consistency over time. All products must be checked for correct consistency before serving to patients. SLT can offer advice.
- **Recommended ONS for patients requiring thickened fluids by consistency with preparation instructions:** Recommendations made for safe and appropriate prescribing.

Description	Product Name (Manufacturer)	Unit Size	Preparation Instructions	List Price ⁴
"Naturally thick" supplements	Fortisip Compact (Nutricia)	125ml	None	£1.45/unit
	Fresubin 5kcal shot - Lemon	120ml	None	£2.80/unit
Stage 1 (Syrup) thick Pre-thickened: no thickener required	Nutilis Complete Stage 1 (Nutricia)	125ml	None	£2.21/unit
	Calogen Extra/Calogen Extra Shots	200ml/40ml	None	£4.98/ £0.96/ unit
Stage 1 (syrup) thick Additional thickener required	Slo Milkshake Stage 2	1 sachet + 200ml whole milk	Shaken	£0.84/unit
	Complan Shake	1 sachet + 200ml whole milk	Resource ThickenUp Clear: 3 scoops (stirred + time to thicken to correct consistency)	£0.70/unit
	Aymes Shake	1 sachet + 200ml whole milk	Resource ThickenUp Clear: 5 scoops (stirred + 10 minutes to thicken to correct consistency)	£0.70/unit
	Fortisip	200ml	Resource Thicken up Clear: 4 scoops (shaken)	£1.40/unit
	Fortisip Extra (Nutricia)	200ml	Resource ThickenUp Clear: 3 scoops (shaken)	£2.18/unit
	Ensure 2kcal (Abbott)	200ml	Resource ThickenUp Clear: 3 scoops (shaken)	£2.22/unit
Stage 2 (custard) thick Pre-thickened:	None suitable(see note below) – All Stage 3 supplements can be used if patient is safely tolerating a puree diet.			
Stage 2 (custard) thick Additional thickener required	Whole Milk	100ml	Resource ThickenUp Clear: 2 scoops (stirred)	
	Slo Milkshake stage 2	1 sachet + 200ml whole milk	Resource ThickenUp Clear: 2 scoops (shaken)	£0.84/unit
	All Stage 3 (custard) thick ONS can be used if patient is safely tolerating a puree diet consistency.			
Stage 3 (pudding) thick Pre-thickened: No thickener required	Resource Dessert Energy (Nestle)	125g	None	£1.63/unit
	Resource Dessert Fruit (Nestle)	125g	None	£1.63/unit
	Ensure Plus Crème (Abbott)	125g	None	£1.88/unit
	Forticreme Complete (Nutricia)	125g	None	£1.96/unit
	Fresubin Crème (Fresenius)	125g	None	£1.98/unit
	Nutilis Fruit Stage 3 (Nutricia)	150g	None	£2.36/unit
Stage 3 (pudding) thick Additional thickener required	None identified More cost effective to prescribe a Stage 3 ONS (above)			

- Before prescribing ONS, refer to NELFT document, **"Guidance on the Appropriate Use of Oral Nutritional Supplements for Adults in Primary Care"** to determine if prescribed supplements are indicated for your patient.
- This guidance should be read with NELFT document, **"Prescribing Advice: Thickener"**
- Patients with dysphagia requiring ONS should be referred to a Dietitian, especially if there has been a change in recommended fluid consistencies.
- Guidance may be helpful when reviewing prescriptions or awaiting dietetic input but DOES NOT replace dietetic input.

Guidance prepared by a Working Group of NELFT Dietitians and SLTs based on consistency and taste trials of ONS with first (Resource ThickenUp Clear) and second line (Thick & Easy) thickeners.

*Opinion on consistency from Working Group: ¹akin to thick Stage 1; ²akin to naturally thick; ³akin to Stage 1. 4. Prices based on July 2016 dm+d listing

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Approved by BHR CCG Area Prescribing sub-Committees (APC) September 2016 Review: September 2019