

Bringing food into the hospital

Food prepared by Patient Food Services at Perth Children's Hospital (PCH) has followed strict Food Safety Standards required for patients in hospital.

Children who are sick in hospital, especially younger children, are generally at greater risk of food poisoning.

For this reason, it is preferred that meals from home or outside suppliers are not given to patients. However, if you choose to bring food in for your child, it is important that it is carefully prepared and stored to reduce the risk of food poisoning. This is a guide to help you identify which foods are suitable to bring in and how to make them as safe as possible.

Guidelines for bringing food into PCH

1. When you bring food into the hospital, you are responsible for ensuring that the meal is safe for the child it is intended for. Hospital staff are unable to ensure the safety of food brought in from outside.
2. Please speak to a nurse or doctor caring for your child before bringing any food in, as your child may be fasting for a procedure or have special dietary needs while in hospital. The nurse will be able to tell you if it is okay to give food to your child.
3. Wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling food.
4. Ensure that food is covered to avoid contamination during transport and storage. Examples of appropriate covering include: plastic wrap, a container with a lid, or a zip-lock bag.
5. All fresh food items should be transported in a heat or cool-pack to ensure foods are kept at correct temperatures (between 5°C and 60°C) to avoid food related illnesses.
6. All food items must be labelled with the patient's first and last names, date of birth, ward location, and the date and time the food arrived in the patient's room. Please ask for a patient label for this. If items are not labelled, they will be discarded.
7. Do not share food with other patients or children as many of our patients have special food needs. Please check with a nurse.
8. It is recommended that foods brought in are pre-packaged, sealed foods that do not require refrigeration, e.g. pre-wrapped biscuits.
9. Prepared foods from external sources such as takeaway meals must be consumed within 30 minutes of being brought into the hospital. Leftover items must be discarded after this time.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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