

Bringing in frozen foods

The only food that can be stored in the ward patient freezers are single serve sealed icy-poles (no ice-cream) as freezers are not temperature monitored.

They must be clearly labelled with patient's name, ward, room number and today's date using the **blue** labels available next to patient fridges.

Partially consumed icy-poles **must not** be returned to the ward pantry patient freezer.

WARNING: The RCH cannot accept responsibility for the safety of food prepared from external sources. These foods may be discarded without consultation in the interests of protecting the food safety for all patients, in compliance with food safety legislation.

All food and beverages for parents **must** be stored in parent-provided fridges and freezers. Food in parent fridges and freezers **must not** be offered to patients as parent fridges and freezers are not temperature monitored.

We thank you for your cooperation in helping to make sure food is safe for children.

Nutrition and Food Services

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Food storage guidelines

Information for parents about food given to patients from external sources

Families must ensure all foods brought into The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) for patients are safe and are consumed in compliance with food safety legislation.

Families must always check with nursing staff before giving their child food from external sources to ensure there is no interference with their medical treatment.

External sources comprises 'Foods which are prepared in a private domestic kitchen and retail vendors including those within the RCH premises'.



Bringing meals into hospital

The RCH strongly recommends children admitted to hospital do not consume meals from external sources during their stay.

Meals left at room temperature can allow harmful bacteria to grow in food putting your child at risk of becoming very unwell. Transporting and inadequately reheating food or reheating food multiple times can also promote conditions for bacterial growth.

If meals must be brought from home or outside suppliers they must adhere to the following:

- Externally prepared meals (meals not prepared by the RCH Kitchen) must be transported with an icepack and in an insulated food carry bag.
- Externally prepared meals must be eaten immediately after its arrival. A microwave is available in the ward pantry kitchen for reheating meals. The meal must be heated through evenly, consumed immediately and not reheated again.
- Externally prepared meals **cannot** be stored in any RCH patient fridges for later use.
- If your child does not finish the meal, it must be discarded. Partially eaten meals or leftovers must not be stored in the fridge for later use and will be thrown out.

RCH staff will not be involved in the preparation, handling and provision of meals brought in from home or external sources.

Bringing in packaged single-serve items requiring refrigeration

Perishable, single serve, sealed (**unopened**) items such as yoghurts, drinks, custards can be brought into the hospital under the following conditions:

- They must be stored in the **patient fridge** (in the ward pantry) until they are consumed.
- They must be clearly labelled with patient's name, ward, room number and today's date using the blue labels available next to patient fridges.
- Any open item must be completely consumed or discarded. They **must not** be returned to the patient fridge.

Staff will discard any food found in the ward pantry fridge which does not meet these guidelines.

The only food that can be stored in pantry patient freezers are icy-poles (no ice-cream) as freezers are not temperature monitored.

Bringing in non-perishable snack foods

Non-perishable items (e.g. breakfast cereals, fresh whole and dried fruit, sweet and dry biscuits, plain cakes, muffins, scones, pretzels, chips, popcorn, confectionary, soft drinks and UHT milk) can be brought in from external sources.

They must be individually sealed or packaged and can be stored at your child's bedside.