

SOP015: Thickener Ordering

Purpose	A guide for processing requests for fluid thickeners which are on the patient's repeat template.
Scope	This SOP is for processing prescriptions requests for fluid thickeners for both new and continuing requests
For the use of	Prescription Clerks, Receptionists, Administrators, Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacists

Request for prescription of thickener received (NHS App, paper slip, footfall etc.)

Please check appendix if you are unsure of products.

Repeat Prescription coordinator/administrator investigations and actions.

Please check to following before issuing the prescription:

- 1) Check that the IDDSI level and preparation instructions are clearly documented in the repeat dose box, see example below. If the **IDDSI level is not documented**, it is a **patient safety** issue → **Highlight to your pharmacist to amend. Item can still be issued.**

Nutilus Clear powder (Nutricia Ltd)

525 gram - Add 2 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 2)

- a. **Exception:** Instant Carobel powder may be used as a thickener for paediatric dysphagia in children **under 3 years only**. Prescribing directions should include **number of scoops per millilitres of fluid only (not an IDDSI level)** as per Speech and Language Therapist (SALT).
 - b. Please note Instant Carobel powder may also be prescribed for '**Thickening feeds in the treatment of vomiting**' (ACBS) in infants, though it should not be prescribed routinely. See link to [Norfolk and Waveney ICB Infant Formula Guideline and Formulary](#).
- 2) **Quantity prescribed** in 28 day period and how often patient is requesting. If ordering is very erratic i.e. 3 months between last issue, or if repeatedly ordering before the due date → **please highlight to your pharmacist. Item can still be issued.**

Pharmacist investigations and actions: Please refer to [N&WICB Thickener guidance](#).

- 1) Quantity issues
 - a. Please check patient is prescribed the **recommended number of tins per month as per table 1**, a higher volume may be prescribed in some cases to match a higher fluid intake and should be agreed individually. If thickener prescribed is not in table ensure patient is prescribed correct amount according to most recent SALT recommendations (letter or entry on SystemOne/EMIS).

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Reviewed by: Anna Samkin, dietitian - Norfolk and Waveney Medicines Optimisation Team		Approved by: Anne Jordan, POD Supervisor

b. Under-requesting may indicate a compliance issue- this may warrant investigation by the GP.

2) Documentation of IDDSI levels

a. Ensure correct directions are documented: include **IDDSI level and instructions (see table 1)**. 'As Directed' is not appropriate. You can find this information in most recent correspondence from SALT (letter or entry on SystemOne/EMIS).

b. IDDSI level may change over time so please update directions, IDDSI level, and amount prescribed if SALT recommendations change. **Any Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) also need to be reviewed to check suitability.** Please highlight to the dietitian if the patient is being actively reviewed.

If pharmacist unable to resolve query or unsure and would like to discuss, then contact the NWICB dietetic team as per blue box below.

Table 1: Recommended quantity of thickener required per month for the most common thickeners in N&W

Aim for approx.1.5L fluid per day	Product and recommended dose	Tins required per month to thicken 1.5L per day
Nutilis Clear (Gum) 175g tin 1.25g scoop 140 scoops per tin	Level 1 (Slightly thick) 1 scoop per 200ml <i>'Add 1 scoop per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 1)'</i>	2 tins (350g)
	Level 2 (mildly thick) 2 scoops per 200ml <i>'Add 2 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 2)'</i>	3 tins (525g)
	Level 3 (moderately thick) 3 scoops per 200ml <i>'Add 3 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 3)'</i>	5 tins (875g)
	Level 4 (extremely thick) 7 scoops per 200ml <i>'Add 7 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 4)'</i>	10 tins (1750g)
Thick and Easy Clear (Gum) 126g tin 1.4g scoop 90 scoops per tin	Level 1 (Slightly thick) 1 scoop per 200ml <i>'Add 1 scoop per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 1)'</i>	3 tins (378g)
	Level 2 (mildly thick) 2 scoops per 200ml <i>'Add 2 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 2)'</i>	5 tins (630g)
	Level 3 (moderately thick) 3 scoops per 200ml <i>'Add 3 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 3)'</i>	7 tins (882g)
	Level 4 (extremely thick) 6 scoops per 200ml <i>'Add 6 scoops per 200ml to all drinks (IDDSI level 4)'</i>	14 tins (1764g)

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Contact details for NWICB Dietitians: nwicb.dieteticqueries@nhs.net

Please provide the following details with your query:

- 1) Patient name
- 2) NHS number
- 3) GP practice
- 4) Type of query (ONS, thickener, infant formula) and product
- 5) Reason why highlighted to team

Appendix: List of thickeners which may be recommended by SALT (June 2024) –
Please note table 1 includes directions and quantities for Nutilis Clear and Thick and Easy Clear only, other thickeners are different sizes and scoops required for different IDDSI levels may change, please follow SALT advice.

Gum Based Thickeners	Starch Based Thickeners
Nutilis Clear (Nutricia)	Multi-thick (Abbott)
Thick and Easy Clear (Fresenius Kabi)	Nutilis Powder (Nutricia)
Swalloweze Clear (Nualtra)	Resource Thicken Up powder (Nestle)
Resource Thicken Up Clear (Nestle)	Thick and Easy Original (Fresenius Kabi)
Carobel (Nutricia)	Thicken Aid
Under 3 years only	

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