

Taste for pleasure

Information for families and friends

This information sheet explains what 'taste for pleasure' is and how it can be delivered. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the team caring for your family member or friend.

What is taste for pleasure?

When a person can no longer eat or drink in the last days of life, we give them regular mouth care to make sure that their mouth is clean, moist and feels as comfortable as possible.

Providing mouth care with their favourite flavours, for example, fruit juice, tea, chocolate mousse, custard or even alcohol can also give them 'taste for pleasure'.

How is it done?

First, we need to make sure that the person's mouth is clean. Dip a mouth sponge in water and gently move it around their lips, mouth, teeth and tongue. If their mouth is still not clean, ask a member of staff for help.

Once the person's mouth is clean, dip a fresh mouth sponge into their favoured liquid (thin or thick). Squeeze the sponge against the side of a cup to remove any excess and then gently move it over their lips and tongue so they can enjoy the taste.

This can be repeated as often as needed by staff, family and friends.

If 'taste for pleasure' becomes uncomfortable for the person or if you have any concerns, please ask a member of staff for help.

We encourage family and friends to tell the ward staff what the person's favourite flavours are.

A 'taste for pleasure' sign will be placed above the bed so that staff are aware to offer 'taste for pleasure' as part of their care for that person.

We cannot provide alcohol. However, if ward staff say it is safe and appropriate to do so, family and friends can bring a small quantity onto the ward.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

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If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net