

Bringing Food to Friends or Family Members in Care



northern health
the northern way of caring

What You Need to Know About Bringing Food for Your Loved One

It is important for a resident's quality of life to enjoy foods prepared by family and friends. Our goal is to support friends and families bringing in food to their loved ones, while optimizing safety by considering allergies/dietary needs, swallowing difficulties, and food safety.

Residents who would like to be served foods prepared outside their care home must provide consent. Let your care team know your loved one would like to participate.



Safe Food Practices

- Always wash your hands with soap and warm water before and after preparing and serving food.
- If you are unsure about your family member or friend's allergies/dietary needs, please check with the charge nurse.
- Transport food as quickly as possible. Never leave food sitting in a warm vehicle.
- Keep cold foods cold (less than 4C).
- Keep hot foods hot (above 60C) and make sure they are eaten within two hours of preparation.
- We encourage you to take leftovers with you after your loved one has enjoyed them.
- If food is being left for your loved one to enjoy later:
 - use clean containers to store
 - clearly label food with their name
 - include the date it was prepared
 - label with contents of container (for example, soup, cake, etc)
 - store in fridge if required
- Please note Northern Health staff are not expected to handle/prepare food brought in by friends or family.

Refer to the Safe Food Practices section of this pamphlet if you wish to bring in food items. Some home-prepared foods can present a risk of food poisoning and require special care and attention. Please refer to the table below for guidance.

Safest Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cakes and squares without cream filling • Unopened containers of store-bought juice, yogurt, or milk • Cookies, muffins, breads, fruit pies or tarts. • Individual meals prepared in a restaurant or grocery store that day.
Take Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casseroles, gravies, cooked or creamed vegetables, eggs and foods containing eggs, homemade dressings, sauces and dips, macaroni or potato salads, and salads containing raw fruits and vegetables. • Meat, poultry, fish and shellfish dishes, and sandwiches made with fillings like egg, meat, fish, seafood, poultry, and cheese. • Cream, meringue or pumpkin pies, and pastries with meat or cream fillings.
Take Extra Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-canned foods, leftovers and previously-heated foods • Raw sprouts, grapefruit, eggs, seafood and shellfish. • Ready-to-eat packaged cold meats, meat spreads or seafood platters. • Unpasteurized milk, unpasteurized milk products, soft and semi-soft cheeses, or juices.

If you do not see the food item you would like to bring in listed above, please check with your loved one's care team.

Please note you are responsible for food left and stored for your loved one. If it is in the resident's best interest, staff may discard expired/ expiring items in personal or communal fridges.

Do You Want to Bring Food to Share with Others?

We recognize that sharing food with others can be a meaningful part of quality of life for people living in care and their friends and family.

If you are looking to bring in food to share with other residents in care outside of your loved one, to ensure the best care and safety of all residents please:

- follow the guidelines outlined in this pamphlet.
- make arrangements with staff ahead of time when possible.
- check in with staff every time before distributing food.

Only staff or those designated by a resident, may assist residents with eating.

*By working together we can make sure
all residents enjoy the benefits of sharing food
in a safe and inclusive environment.*



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