

NOTIFICATION OF A SPECIAL DIET

CHILD'S BASIC INFORMATION To be completed by the parent/guardian of a child under 18 years	Last name	
	First names	Year of birth
	Day-care centre/school	Group/class
	Parent/guardian	
	E-mail address	Telephone number
SPECIAL DIET FOR HEALTH REASONS Medical certificate must be enclosed	<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes (personal meal plan to be attached as necessary)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Coeliac disease <input type="checkbox"/> can eat gluten-free oat <input type="checkbox"/> cannot eat gluten-free oat <input type="checkbox"/> cannot eat gluten-free wheat starch	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Food allergy with severe symptoms <input type="checkbox"/> Adrenaline injection as a backup treatment	
	Forbidden food _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Risk of a generalised allergic reaction, i.e. anaphylaxis <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Drink at meals for a person with milk allergy: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Personal diet plan enclosed		
OTHER DIET No medical certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian diet (lacto-ovo). Eats <input type="checkbox"/> fish <input type="checkbox"/> poultry	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious diet: <input type="checkbox"/> no pork <input type="checkbox"/> no blood products <input type="checkbox"/> no beef	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Low-lactose <input type="checkbox"/> Lactose-free	
OTHER THINGS TO OBSERVE		
NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES	The child's absences must always be notified to the day-care centre/school kitchen because his/her meals are prepared separately.	
CHANGES IN DIET	Notify the day-care centre staff or school kitchen of any changes in the child's diet. A medical certificate is required for new food allergies. The day-care centre staff will notify the kitchen staff.	
SIGNATURE	Date	Parent/guardian's signature

SPECIAL DIETS IN DAY CARE AND SCHOOL

A special diet will be arranged in day-care centres and schools for health reasons based on a medical certificate. The medical certificate and the notification completed on its basis are to be delivered to the day-care centre staff or the school kitchen. The medical certificate is to be requested from where the need for it was diagnosed. A medical certificate is not needed for a low-lactose or lactose-free diet, vegetarian diet or any diet based on religious beliefs.

A special diet is ensured so that the child will not receive any inappropriate food items. The menu of children on special diets will be as close as possible to the menu of others.

An updated notification of a special diet must be submitted at the beginning of each school year, preferably before the start of day care or school. A notification of a special diet and a medical certificate must always be submitted when the child changes day-care centres or schools and whenever new food allergies are diagnosed.

Diabetes

Meals are the same as for the other children. When a diabetic child starts day care or school, a meeting is arranged between the child's parent/guardian and representatives of the day-care centre/school, the head of the kitchen operations and nurse. The meeting concerns the meal practices during the day-care/school day, such as serving meals, any snacks and juices needed in case of sudden hypoglycaemia (excessively low blood sugar). At day-care centres, the personnel will see to food portions, and at schools the teacher or special needs assistant will guide the pupil in terms of portions. The kitchen staff will provide assistance as needed.

Coeliac disease

Wheat, rye and barley are replaced with gluten-free grain and gluten-free products with an analysed gluten content of less than 20 mg/kg. The notification of a special diet is used to indicate if the child cannot eat gluten-free oat or gluten-free wheat starch.

Allergies

Severe allergic symptom or key food item: Milk, egg, wheat, fish and nuts are the most common causes of severe allergic reactions in children. An allergy diet is based on a diagnosis and medical certificate written by a doctor. The notification of a special diet for day care or school is used to indicate all foods to be avoided that cause severe or problematic symptoms, and a medical certificate must be provided for these. Nutritionally vital food items will be replaced with other food items that are suitable. If a diet is particularly restricted, a personal diet plan must be appended to the notification.

The day-care centre or school must be informed of the use of an adrenaline injection and of what the course of treatment is if the child accidentally eats food to be avoided.

When more food items become available due to cancelling the allergic child's diet limitations, the kitchen is to be informed of this in writing. No new medical certificate is needed in this case.

Mild symptoms needing no special treatment: If the child gets mild symptoms from a food item, these are prevented by moving the food item aside during the meal. In this case, a special diet or medical certificate is not needed. Food items causing mild, temporary allergic symptoms, such as itchiness of the mouth and skin flushing, typically include uncooked vegetables and fruit (tomato, carrot, apple)

especially with children suffering from birch pollinosis or atopic dermatitis. In most cases, vegetables causing mild symptoms can be eaten cooked without any resulting symptoms. Food additive and spice allergies are extremely rare.

It is vital for children to learn to eat all-around meals. The more food items are avoided in a child's diet, the harder it becomes to create a nutritionally well-balanced diet. Extensive avoidance of vegetables, fruit and berries decreases the intake of several vitamins and minerals and may put the child at risk of weight gain. Therefore, only those food items will be left out that have been found to cause such problems for the child that it is justified to also exclude them from day-care centre or school meals.

In the "Other things to observe" section of the form, things to observe during meals may be recorded, such as moving aside vegetables that cause mild allergic reactions.

Diet experiments

Diet experiments (temporary avoidance of certain food items) can only be performed based on a medical certificate. The start and end dates of diet experiments must be indicated in the notification of a special diet. In such cases, the food items mentioned in the medical certificate to be avoided will be left out. No other diet experiments will be implemented.

New food items must always be tested at home first, not at the day-care centre or school.

Lactose intolerance

Milk products containing lactose will be replaced with low-lactose or lactose-free products. Low-lactose milk/sour milk or a lactose-free milk beverage will be served at meals. The notification form is used to indicate whether a low-lactose or lactose-free diet is needed. No medical certificate is needed for these.

Kela-reimbursed special formulas, clinical nutritive preparations and other dietary supplements ordered by a doctor

The children or their parents/guardians must provide the kitchen with special formulas, clinical nutritive preparations or other similar products and any other individual product brands ordered by a doctor that are reimbursed to clients by Kela under the Health Insurance Act.

Vegetarian diet and diets based on religious beliefs

Children following a vegetarian diet are served lacto-ovo vegetarian dishes that, besides cereals, vegetables, legumes, fruit and berries, also include milk products and egg. The food may also contain gelatine and other animal-based ingredients and additives. No other vegetarian food options are served besides the lacto-ovo vegetarian diet.

No medical certificate is required for the vegetarian diet but it must be notified at day-care centres and primary schools using a notification of a special diet. At secondary schools and upper secondary schools, a vegetarian option is served daily as an alternative to the basic lunch without a notification of a special diet.

In the case of religion-based diets, pork, beef or blood products are mainly replaced with the lacto-ovo vegetarian diet. No medical certificate is required for diets based on religious beliefs.

Additional information

If you have questions about special diets at day-care centres or schools, please contact the kitchen staff.

If you need advice on composing or expanding the child's or young person's diet, please contact the child health clinic or school nurse. If necessary, the nurse will refer you to the City of Espoo's nutritionist.

More information on nutrition for children and the whole family: Let's eat together – food recommendations for families with children, in Finnish <https://julkari.fi/handle/10024/129744>

More information on children's food allergies:

- Current Care Guidelines: Food allergy (children)/for the patient (www.kaypahoito.fi)
- Children's food allergy guide, in Finnish (www.allergia.fi)