

NOTIFICATION OF A SPECIAL DIET

Comprehensive schools and general upper secondary schools

CONFIDENTIAL, Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999), Section 24(1) (25, 32)

14.2.2020

CHILD'S BASIC INFORMATION To be filled in by the parent /guardian of a pupil under 18 years of age.	Last name	
	First names	Year of birth
	School	Class
	Parent/guardian	
	E-mail address	Telephone number
SPECIAL DIET FOR HEALTH REASONS To be filled in based on a medical certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes <input type="checkbox"/> personal meal plan to be attached as necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Coeliac disease <input type="checkbox"/> cannot eat gluten-free oat <input type="checkbox"/> can 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 (The parent/guardian is obliged to inform the day care staff of the use of an adrenaline injection and what the course of treatment is if the child accidentally eats food to be avoided .)	
	Forbidden food _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Danger of a sudden allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached is a separate list of allowed / forbidden foods. Drink at meals for a person with milk allergy: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other diet for health reasons, please specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Personal diet plan enclosed	
	The based on a medical certificate <input type="checkbox"/> (The pupil/guardian submits the medical certificate to the school nurse) The name of the doctor _____ date of medical certificate _____ _____	

SPECIAL DIETS IN SCHOOL

A special diet will be arranged in schools for health reasons based on a medical certificate.

A medical certificate is not required for minor allergies, low-lactose or lactose-free diets, lakto-ovo vegetarian diets, vegan diets or diets based on religious reasons. The special diet notification is binding.

A special diet is ensured so that the child will not receive any inappropriate food items. The meals of those with special diets are made based on the standard menu.

The guardian must submit a medical certificate to the school nurse for archiving.

SPECIAL DIET FOR HEALTH REASONS (in based on a medical certificate)

Diabetes

Meals are the same as for the other children. When a diabetic child starts school, a meeting is arranged between the child's parent/guardian and representatives of school, the head of the kitchen operations and nurse. The meeting concerns the meal practices during the school day, such as serving meals, any snacks and juices needed in case of sudden hypoglycemia (excessively low blood sugar). At school 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 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 guardian is also obliged to inform the teacher of the use of an adrenaline injection and what the course of treatment is if the pupil accidentally eats food to be avoided.

When the diet changes, a new special diet notification must be submitted to the school kitchen.

Other diet for health reasons

This part of the form is for indicating some other diet due to health reasons, such as diet needed to treat irritable bowel syndrome. If needed, an individual diet plan is included as an attachment.

Diet experiments

Diet experiments (temporary avoidance of a certain food) can only be carried out based on a medical certificate or, for a FODMAP diet, a statement by an authorised nutritionist. The exact time period of the diet experiment must be indicated on the special diet form. In such case, the food items to be avoided according to the medical certificate will be left out. No other diet experiments will be implemented. New food items must always be tested at home first.

Clinical nutritive preparations reimbursed by Kela

Guardians themselves take to the school kitchen the products reimbursed by Kela under the Health Insurance Act, clinical nutritive preparations or equivalent products.

OTHER DIET (No medical certificate)

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. The information can be entered under Other things to observe.

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 school meals.

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.

Lacto-ovo vegetarian diet

Vegetarian food is served in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools as a daily alternative for all diners without a special diet notification. If a diner permanently follows a vegetarian diet, they are requested to inform the kitchen staff with this form.

The vegetarian food served is lacto-ovo vegetarian, including milk products and egg as well as grain products, vegetables, fruit and berries. The food may also include gelatin and other animal ingredients and additives.

Vegan diet

A notification of a vegan diet must be given with the special diet form, and the notification is binding. Vegans are recommended to see a nutritionist in order to ensure the balance of the diet. A referral to a nutritionist can be provided by the school nurse or school doctor.

Vegan food is made entirely of vegetable ingredients. Vegan meals are accompanied by an unsweetened oats or soy drink fortified with calcium. In schools where vegan food is not prepared daily and the vegetarian food of the day is not vegan, vegan diners are served a vegan main dish that has been served earlier and re-heated, along with accompaniments. In other words, vegan diners may be served the same food more than once a week.

Diets based on religious beliefs

In diets based on religious beliefs, foods/meals containing pork, beef or blood are mainly replaced by lacto-ovo vegetarian alternatives.

Additional information

If you have questions about special diets at 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 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:

- Eating together – food recommendations for families with children, (<https://julkari.fi/handle/10024/137770>)
- Eating and learning together – recommendations for school meals <http://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/134867>

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)