

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING SPECIAL DIETS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

(Use the form attached to these instructions to notify of a special diet)

Children in early childhood education are provided with special diets for medical reasons, primarily based on a medical report. A medical report is not required for low-lactose diet, vegetarian diet or diet based on religious reasons or ethics.

Vantaa Early Childhood Education recommends that the child require a medical report for a special diet from the doctor/party that treated and/or examined the child. If the child receives no follow-up treatment related to the special diet, the family shall contact its own health center to get the medical report. Furthermore, a counseling-bureau doctor can write the report in connection with a standard examination. The medical report may not date back more than 6 months at the beginning of early childhood education, unless the doctor that provided the report has specified a longer validity.

The City of Vantaa day care centers and their kitchens will not accept foodstuffs brought by the children's guardians and meals prepared at home, except for special substitutes and clinical nutrient preparations. Children with special diets and children with allergies will receive meals according to their diets at the day care center. Meal services providers prepare the meals from raw materials supplied by their own foodstuff suppliers. Early childhood education will implement the special diet in such a way that the child is not given any foodstuff unsuitable for him or her, which does not mean that the child is given every foodstuff that is suitable for him or her. Early childhood education will plan the menu for a child on a special diet to resemble, to the extent possible, the menu for the other children.

When so agreed, safe food can be offered to children in early childhood education. The need for offering safe food to a child is based on a health-care professional's recommendation. You must provide a medical certificate of the need for safe food. The guardian of the child shall fill out the special-diet form and bring the health care services' certificate of the need for safe food to the daycare center or school, as instructed. Meal services will prepare safe food to meet the child's needs. The need for safe food is always analyzed on a customer-specific basis. The guardians are asked to provide a list of safe foods, which will be analyzed with the daycare center and meal services. The list constitutes the basis for the child's meals.

The special diet form shall be delivered annually to the director of the day care center. This procedure will ensure that the information on the child's diet is up-to-date and that the food provider will be aware of the special diet when circumstances change. A new medical certificate is not required every year, if the doctor giving the certificate has specified a longer validity for the special diet or if the special diet is permanent (e.g., diabetes, celiac disease and fish- or nut allergy).

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Diabetes

The meals are the same as those for other children. Nevertheless, the guardians shall, when required, provide the kitchen with the diabetic's personal meal plan, as well as make an appointment with the person in charge of kitchen operations and with the early childhood education employees. During the meeting, the parties agree on meals, potential snacks, and juices required for treating acute cases of hypoglycemia. Early childhood education employees are responsible for portioning the food and for filing the child's medical treatment plan as part of the child's early childhood education plan.

Celiac disease

Wheat, rye and barley will be replaced with gluten-free grain and gluten-free products whose analyzed gluten contents fall below 20 mg/kg. With the guardians' permission, early childhood education will serve food containing gluten-free oats or gluten-free wheat starch.

Lactose intolerance

Lactose-containing milk products will be replaced with low-lactose or lactose-free ones. Low-lactose milk/buttermilk will be served with meals in accordance with the child's tolerance. The guardians' notification will be sufficient for low-lactose diet.

Vegetarian diet and other diets

The children will be served a vegetarian diet at the request of the guardians. In addition to grain products, pulses, vegetables, fruits and berries, the vegetarian diet served also contains animal products such as milk products and eggs (lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet). The guardians and early childhood education employees agree on how strictly the diet will be implemented. Vegan diet shall be notified under the form's "other diet" field. In a religion- or conviction-based diet, pork, beef and blood products are, as a general rule, replaced with other meat.

Kela-compensated special infant formulas, clinical nutrient preparations and other dietary supplements by prescription

The children or their guardians shall themselves bring the special infant formulas, clinical nutrient preparations and other individual products prescribed by a doctor. A medical report is required. When required, a medical care plan will be compiled for the child at health care. The information on the medical health plan (special supplements and nutrient preparations) required for arranging early childhood education will be entered in the child's early childhood education plan. Using the products must be agreed with the day care center director and employees, because the day care center is responsible for distributing the products to the child. The products will be delivered to the early childhood education place in portions (e.g., in bags), at max. one week's portions at a time. The day care center informs the kitchen about using the above-mentioned products.

FOOD ALLERGIES OF CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG

I) **Mild passing reactions:** Vegetables and fruits often give rise to mild allergic reactions — such as itching of the mouth and flushing of skin — especially in children suffering from pollinosis and atopic dermatitis. The majority of vegetables and fruits causing mild reactions are good to eat when cooked. Food-additive and spice allergies are extremely rare, and mildly spiced food served at day care centers is usually suitable for children suffering from atopic dermatitis or food allergy. It is important for children to learn to eat in a versatile manner. If many foodstuffs are excluded from a child's diet, it is difficult to provide him or her with a nutritionally well-balanced diet, and it is also difficult for him/her to learn to eat in a versatile manner. If vegetables and fruits are largely excluded from a child's diet, he or she may not gain a sufficient amount of several vitamins and minerals and may, in addition, be predisposed to excessive weight gain. Therefore, early childhood education aims to exclude from the children's diet only those foodstuffs that have been proven to cause such detriment to them that their exclusion is justified.

II) **Severe allergies and reactions:** In case of food allergies, list the foodstuffs to be avoided, which cause severe reactions or oral mucosa symptoms, respiratory symptoms, skin reactions, or intestinal disorders, in the form. If your child's diet is particularly restricted, attach his or her personal diet plan

to the notification. An allergy diet is based on a doctor's diagnosis, and a medical report is required. Milk, egg, wheat, fish and nuts are the most common foodstuffs causing severe allergic reactions. Early childhood education will replace nutritionally essential foodstuffs with foodstuffs suitable for children with allergies. Early childhood education will require a medical report for all the foodstuffs to be avoided, even if they were not essential and not replaced with other foodstuffs. Guardians shall inform early childhood education of their children's risk of anaphylaxis, use of potential adrenaline shots, and how they should be treated if they accidentally eat such foodstuffs that are to be avoided. Information on the child's adrenaline shots and other medicines, if any, will be filed in the child's medical treatment plan as part of the child's early childhood education plan.

Be sure to always test new foodstuffs at home, not in early childhood education.

If you have any questions about your child's diet in early childhood education, contact first the director of the day care center. If you need counseling about putting together or expanding your child's diet, you can contact the City of Vantaa's dietitian:

1. **Chat on Wednesdays at 10:00–13:00.** Chat is seen on the bottom right of the page as a blue speech bubble. You can transact anonymously on the chat service. The service asks for your postcode for statistics.
2. **Call the nutrition counseling service on weekdays at 9:00–15:00.** You can contact the dietitian by phone on weekdays at 9:00–15:00. If a professional cannot take your call, they will call you back as soon as possible. Nutrition counseling, tel. 040 185 3636
3. **Email your questions to the dietitian.** We try to answer all emails within a week. Do not email any delicate information, such as your identity number or information on diagnoses. Nutrition counseling email: saana.karjalainen@vantaa.fi

Further information on children's food allergies:

Current care guidelines: Food allergy (children) / for the patient (<https://www.kaypahoito.fi/en/>)

Children's food allergy guidelines (<https://www.allergia.fi/en/>)



Notification of special diet

Early childhood education

BASIC INFORMATION ON CHILD

First name

Last name

Date of birth

Day care center / family day care group

Guardian first name

Guardian last name

Tel.

Email

SPECIAL DIET DUE TO HEALTH REASONS Requires a medical report

Diabetes (personal meal plan as an appendix, when required)

Celiac disease, does not tolerate oat

Celiac disease, gluten-free oat is suitable

Celiac disease, does not tolerate gluten-free wheat starch

Food allergy with severe symptoms

Adrenalin injection as auxiliary medicine

Forbidden food ingredient

Risk of anaphylaxis, that is,
life-threatening allergic reaction

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Products with marking "may contain small amounts" **may be offered**

Products with marking "may contain small amounts" **may not be offered**

SAFE FOOD (LIST THE FOOD STUFFS) Requires a medical report

OTHER SPECIAL DIET DUE TO HEALTH REASONS Requires a medical report

OTHER DIET No medical report

no pork	no beef	no foods with blood	no internal organs
Low-lactose substitute milk:	low-lactose	lactose-free	
Lactose-free congenital lactase deficiency (CLD)	Vegan diet		

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

CHANGES IN DIET

Please inform the group personnel of any changes in the child's diet and of the child's absences. They will further notify the meal-services personnel of the changes.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DAY CARE CENTER:

Date	Day care center director's signature	Print name
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GUARDIAN'S DATE AND SIGNATURE

Date	Guardian's signature*	Print name
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KITCHEN HAS RECEIVED THE FORM

Date	Signature	Print name
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* By signing this form, I accept that the day care center director provides the day care center kitchen with the required information about the child's special diet. The form will be kept in a locked cabinet during the child's stay at early childhood education and pre-primary education, and it will be destroyed after the child's customership ends. Potential medical certificates will be returned to the guardians after they have been presented.