

# Special dietary needs and adapted mealtimes

Information for guardians on special dietary needs and adapted mealtimes in schools and preschools.

In the municipalities of Dalarna, we want to create safe and secure mealtimes of good quality for the children and pupils who are our dining guests. In cooperation with Region Dalarna, all of Dalarna's municipalities have prepared common guidelines for special diets and adapted mealtimes. In this material, we describe what special diets and adaptations are offered and the conditions that apply to them.

The application/registration for special diets or adapted mealtimes must be signed by a guardian (or a pupil of legal age) and submitted well in advance of the autumn semester every year. In the event of a change during the school year, the application/registration must be updated immediately.

Special dietary needs due to food allergies and other food-related illnesses and reactions must be certified by a doctor or dietician with some exceptions (see further information). Needs for adapted mealtimes due to neuropsychiatric disorders or the like must be certified either by the school's health service team, the preschool's head teacher, a doctor or a dietician. The certificates help us ensure that we have the right information about your child's needs.

## Dalarna municipalities and Region Dalarna in collaboration



## Special dietary needs due to food allergies or food-related reactions

### Allergies

If your child has special dietary needs due to allergies, you must submit an application/registration and a certificate verifying the allergy from the treating physician or dietician. The certificate must be submitted no later than one month after we began serving the special food. The certificate must state what your child is allergic to and how long the certificate is valid. People grow out of many childhood allergies and the physician in charge should therefore follow up on the child and the allergy regularly so that food is not excluded unnecessarily.

If your child has an allergy, you also need to speak separately with the school's health service or the preschool's head teacher and your child's teachers/educators about what should be done in the event of a possible allergic reaction.

### Cross-reactions with pollen allergy

Since cross reactions to apples, stone fruit, and carrots with pollen allergies often cause minor symptoms, it is enough for the food in raw form to be excluded from the diet. If your child needs to exclude food in raw form due to cross-reactions with pollen allergy, you must write this in the application, but no certificate from a doctor or dietician is required. If these foods need to be excluded in cooked form, it must be certified by a doctor or dietician, however.

### Sensitivity to citrus and red foods due to non-allergic reactions

Children in preschool can sometimes have non-allergic over-sensitivity reactions around the mouth to citrus and red foods, such as strawberries and tomatoes. The reactions always arise from raw foods, but never from cooked. These reactions are not due to allergies and are not dangerous. If your child needs to avoid citrus and certain raw red foods, you should submit an application/registration for special food where you write which foods need to be avoided, but no certificate is needed from a doctor or dietician. In order for your child to receive special food without red foods in cooked form, a certificate is, however, needed from a doctor or dietician.

### Lactose intolerance

Symptoms of lactose intolerance may be unpleasant, but are not dangerous. Most people who are lactose intolerant can handle eating a small amount of lactose. Most dishes contain a small amount of lactose that most people with lactose intolerance can handle, but dishes that contain a lot of milk, such as pancakes, rice pudding, lasagne, potatoes au gratin and soups can contain too much lactose. Lactose intolerance in children in preschool is uncommon in Sweden and any stomach problems should be investigated by a doctor. This is why a certificate from a doctor or dietician is required in order for your child to receive lactose-free food in preschool. However, if your child attends school, a certificate from a doctor or dietician is not required to get lactose-free food.

### Coeliac disease

Gluten-free food is offered if your child has coeliac disease. Coeliac disease is a life-long illness where the treatment is to eat a diet that is free from gluten proteins. You need to submit an application/registration and a certificate from the treating physician or dietician verifying that your child has coeliac disease so that your child will get gluten-free food.

Excluding gluten from the diet due on one's own to stomach problems may mean that the real cause of the stomach problems is not discovered. We therefore do not offer gluten-free special food if the need cannot be certified by a doctor or dietician.

### IBS

If your child has special dietary needs due to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or another gastrointestinal disease, you must submit an application/registration and a certificate from the treating physician or dietician. The certificate must state what foods need to be excluded from the diet and how long the certificate is valid.



### **Other reasons for special food**

If your child has special dietary needs due to another disease, you must submit an application/ registration and a certificate from the treating physician or dietician. The certificate must include relevant information and must state how long the certificate is valid.

## Adapted mealtimes

### Needs-adapted mealtimes

If your child needs adaptations to mealtimes due to physical, sensory, cognitive or development-related disabilities, such as neuropsychiatric disorders, your child can get needs-adapted mealtimes. To get needs-adapted mealtimes, you must submit an application/registration and the need must be certified by the preschool's head teacher, the school's health service team or a treating physician or dietician.

In preschool, an individual adaptation of the mealtimes is always done for the child. For school pupils with needs-adapted mealtimes, most schools primarily offer a fixed five-day menu with alternative dishes. Besides this five-day menu, the pupil with needs-adapted mealtimes is also always welcome to eat the food offered in the regular service. If your child needs further adaptation of lunch, breakfast or snacks, it may be done in consultation with you and/or your child, the school's health service team and the kitchen manager.

### Adapted meals for religious reasons

If your child needs to exclude certain foods for reasons linked to any of the five world religions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and

Hinduism, adapted meals are offered. The adapted dish may be a vegetarian dish.

### Vegetarian food

If your child chooses to exclude food with an animal origin, vegetarian food is offered. When you apply, the kinds of vegetarian food offered will be indicated.

**If you have any questions, please contact your municipality.**