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# Is Your Bladder Bothered by What You Eat?

## Certain foods and drinks may irritate your bladder

When you have bladder symptoms—such as urinary frequency, urgency, urge incontinence, or bladder pain—there are certain foods and drinks that you may want to remove from your diet. Some foods and drinks may bother your bladder more, but not everyone is sensitive to the same things. You should talk to your healthcare provider about any symptoms you are having and any dietary changes.

**Try removing items from this list one at a time, for at least a week each, to see if you are sensitive to that item. If not, you can add it back to your normal diet. And if you are sensitive to it, you may want to avoid that item in the future.**

The most common foods and drinks that may bother your bladder are:

- Alcohol
- Caffeinated beverages
- Carbonated beverages

Some other foods and drinks that may bother your bladder include:

- Artificial sweeteners
- Cheese
- Chili
- Chocolate
- Citrus fruits
- Coffee and tea
- Tomatoes
- Vinegar

**Remember, it's important to talk with your healthcare provider about managing your diet.**

# The IC-Smart Diet\*

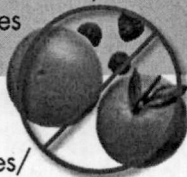
Many people with interstitial cystitis (IC) find that changes in their diet can help to control IC symptoms and avoid IC flare-ups. Typically, avoiding foods known to be common bladder irritants, such as coffee or citrus products, is a good idea. This helpful guide can help you make "IC-Smart" meal choices. Keep it handy for easy reference when dining out or when preparing meals at home.

## Fruits

**IC Friendly:** Bananas; blueberries; honeydew melons, watermelons; raisins; Gala, Fuji, and Pink Lady apples; pumpkins; and pears

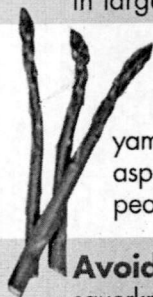


**Avoid:** Grapefruit, lemons, oranges, pineapples, kiwis, sour or tart apples (Granny Smith) and nectarines, tart or bitter grapes, cranberries, sour strawberries in large quantities, and sour cherries

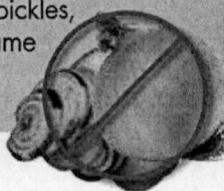


## Vegetables

**IC Friendly:** Potatoes, sweet potatoes/yams, most beans, bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, asparagus, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, mushrooms, peas, radishes, squash, and zucchini



**Avoid:** Raw onions, hot chili peppers, pickles, sauerkraut, tomato products, and edamame and roasted soybeans



## Milk/Dairy

**IC Friendly:** Milk; and American, cottage, mozzarella, mild cheddar, feta, ricotta, and string cheeses



**Avoid:** Yogurt (lemon, lime, orange, chocolate, mocha, or artificial sugars), processed and heavily spiced cheeses, and chocolate ice cream



## Carbohydrates/Grains

**IC Friendly:** Wheat, rice, and corn pastas; quinoa, oats, buckwheat, matzo, polenta, grits, couscous, millet, spelt, and breads (except those listed below)



**Avoid:** Heavily processed or fortified breads and pastas; heavily preserved, sweetened, flavored and chocolate cereals; and soy flour



## Meats/Fish

**IC Friendly:** Chicken, turkey, beef, pork, lamb, shrimp, tuna, salmon, and deli meats (gluten and color free)



**Avoid:** Aged, canned, cured, processed, prepackaged, or smoked meats/fish; and deli meats (heavily spiced, salted, or flavored; ie, salami)



## Nuts/Oils

**IC Friendly:** Almonds, cashews, peanuts, and most oils



**Avoid:** Filberts, hazelnuts, pecans, and pistachios



## Beverages

**IC Friendly:** Water; whole, low-fat, nonfat, lactaid, rice, goat, and almond milk; blueberry and pear juice; vanilla, coconut, and caramel milk shakes; and chamomile, peppermint, and herbal teas



**Avoid:** Alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine; carbonated drinks, such as soda; coffee and tea; citrus (grapefruit, orange), tomato, acai, and cranberry juices; and chocolate, coffee, and mocha milk shakes

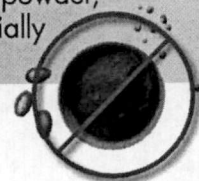


## Seasonings

**IC Friendly:** Garlic and other seasonings (except those listed below)



**Avoid:** Ketchup, spicy mustard, miso, soy sauce, vinegar, cayenne, hot curry powder, horseradish, and spicy foods (especially Mexican, Indian, and Thai foods)



## Food Additives

**Avoid:** Ascorbic acid; monosodium glutamate (MSG); aspartame (NutraSweet®); saccharin; and foods containing preservatives, artificial ingredients/colors

\*This is not an all-inclusive list of foods and beverages that are IC friendly or should be avoided.

†NutraSweet is a registered trademark of NutraSweet Property Holdings, Inc.

# Dining Out: The IC-Smart Way

## Plan ahead

Before making plans to eat at a restaurant, it's a good idea to check online or call ahead to ask about the menu. This will enable you to enjoy your meal and feel good afterward, too!

## When ordering your meal

- Ask questions
  - Ask your waiter what spices are used in particular dishes
  - If you are unsure of an ingredient, ask what it is
- Modify your selection
  - It's your meal—don't be afraid to specify how you would like it prepared
  - When ordering a salad, tell the waiter **no** onions
  - Substitute a plain baked potato for a spicy rice combination
  - Ask for salad dressings and other possible "trigger" items to be served "on the side"
- Be careful with spicy foods
  - Pay attention to the type of cuisine you eat. Different cuisines may contain spices that you may be unfamiliar with
- Know your "IC-Smart" menu choices
  - Most restaurants offer plain (not marinated) steak and chicken
  - Some chain restaurant foods may contain preservatives