

Eating
with
IC

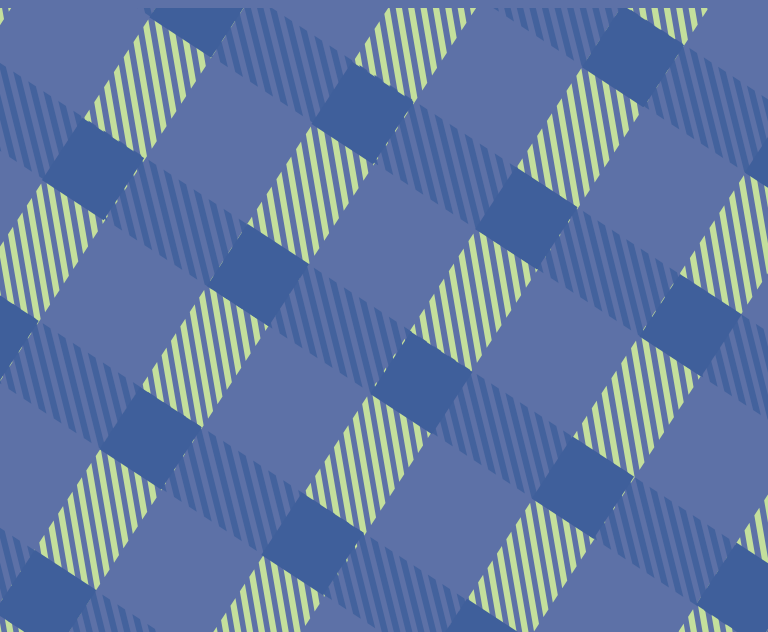
www.ichelp.org



Conquering IC.
Changing Lives.

Interstitial Cystitis Association

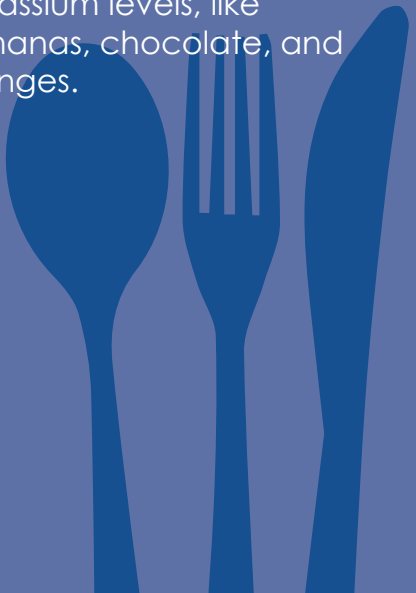
Research about the effect of diet on interstitial cystitis, or IC, is limited. But, many people with IC report that certain foods appear to irritate their bladder. And, they find that changing what they eat and drink can help control IC symptoms and flare-ups.



What things can bother people with IC?

Research links a handful of foods and drinks to IC flare-ups, including:

- Coffee, tea, soda, alcohol, and citrus juices including cranberry juice.
- Foods and drinks with artificial sweeteners (aspartame and saccharin).
- Hot peppers and spicy food.
- Some foods with high potassium levels, like bananas, chocolate, and oranges.





However, there appears to be great individual variation in the effect of foods and drinks on IC symptoms. How much, how often, and the specific combination of foods and drinks varies for each person. Also, some fresh foods that bother you may not cause a flare-up when they are cooked. For example, though a fresh apple may irritate your bladder, you may be able to enjoy applesauce.

Many people with IC note worsening of symptoms with foods, drinks, medicines, and supplements containing preservatives, artificial ingredients, colors, and monosodium glutamate (MSG). Flares may occur within minutes of eating or drinking a trigger item, or may occur hours or days later.

Some IC patients have additional symptoms caused by food allergies, including sensitivities to wheat, corn, rye, oats, and barley. Other patients with milk allergies and lactose intolerance may experience a bad response to these foods. Women with vulvodynia may need to avoid foods high in oxalates. Talk with your healthcare provider about any food intolerances and potential cross reactions.

Discovering which foods and beverages to restrict can be a lengthy process.



To determine your personal trigger foods, use this list of the least to most bothersome foods, or download a copy at www.ichelp.org/ICFoodList:

BLADDER FRIENDLY includes foods that rarely bother even the most sensitive IC bladders. If you are newly diagnosed, eat those foods until you experience some relief from your symptoms. It may take a few weeks, but do your best to stick with it!

TRY IT includes foods that are generally safe to eat, though they might bother more sensitive bladders. If your bladder is improving, these foods are safe to try. Start with a small quantity and see how you do.

CAUTION includes foods which trigger bladder discomfort. Try these foods only if your bladder is no longer sensitive.



Hints for Determining Your Trigger Foods

Don't be afraid to eat.

There are many foods that you can eat with IC that will not bother your bladder.

When trying a risky food, start with smaller quantities.

Try $\frac{1}{2}$ a piece of fruit or a dash of spice. See how your body responds and if you do well with that food, then try gradually increasing the quantity.

Figure out what brands you can eat.

Many "brands" of the same food may have completely different ingredients and additives. Before giving up on a specific food, try different brands.

Become a label-reader.

Take a minute to double check the ingredients in packaged foods.

How Do I Figure out What I can Eat and Drink?


1. Keep an OK food and symptom diary while you are experimenting with your diet.
2. Ask your healthcare provider about foods that may compromise the effectiveness of medicines and other treatments.
3. Don't be afraid to eat. There are many foods that you can eat that will not bother your bladder. Most IC patients find they can add to their personal OK food list as their symptoms improve. Some may even be able to occasionally consume foods from the Caution list.
4. If your symptoms flare after consuming a problem food, return to the foods you know to be ok for your bladder until the flare passes.
5. When possible, shop for fresh foods. Processed foods often contain ingredients that can be irritating including some preservatives, artificial flavorings, additives, and/or artificial vitamins. Organic foods often contain fewer additives and may be useful in an IC diet.
6. Many "brands" of the same food have completely different additives. Before giving up on a specific food, you might want to try different brands.
7. Pre-existing food allergies, such as an allergy to nuts or corn, can also trigger bladder irritation and, possibly, a stronger allergic reaction. If you are allergic to specific foods, avoid these foods even if they are listed below.



Dining out

When you are eating at restaurants or social gatherings, ask about ingredients and stay away from dishes where ingredients are hard to discern. Spicy ethnic foods can pose a problem when dining out. The ingredients in these dishes are often difficult to determine. Before ordering, ask your waiter what spices are used in particular dishes.

Least to Most Bothersome Food List



Please review the foods and drinks that many IC patients report least bothersome (**Bladder Friendly**), okay to eat (**Try It**), and most bothersome (**Caution**).

The list is not a dietary guideline or a meal plan, but rather a guide to assist you in determining problem and non-problem foods. For more information on IC and diet, go to www.ichelp.org/ICDiet.

BEVERAGES

BLADDER FRIENDLY

WATER – test one that works for you

JUICE – blueberry, pear

MILK, MILK SUBSTITUTES – almond, rice, Lactaid

MILKSHAKE – vanilla

TEA – chamomile, peppermint

NON-DAIRY CREAMERS – check label

EGGNOG – non alcoholic, without problem ingredients

TRY IT

JUICE – low-acid orange, grape, some apple, baby

COFFEE – herbal, low-acid decaf, roasted carob

TEA – alfalfa, roasted carob

SODA – root beer with ice (decaffeinated, not diet)

SPORTS DRINKS – test to find one that works for you (e.g., blue Gatorade®)

CAUTION

ALCOHOL – not recommended with many IC medicines

WATER – carbonated, vitamin, flavored

JUICE – cranberry, orange, acai

MILK – chocolate, soy

COFFEE – regular, decaf

TEAS – regular, green, herbal, iced

SODAS – colas, citrus, orange, diet

DRINK POWDERS – such as Kool-aid®, lemonade, orange, or powdered ice tea drinks

ENERGY DRINKS – guarana, mate

GRAINS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

BREADS – corn bread, oat bread, pita, potato bread, white bread, Italian sweet bread, whole wheat bread

CEREALS – most cereals without problem ingredients, oat cereal, rice cereal (hot or cold)

CRACKERS – matzo

GRAINS – couscous, grits, millet, quinoa, spelt

FLOURS – buckwheat, wheat

PASTA

RICE

TRY IT

BREADS – rye, sourdough

CEREALS – instant packaged hot cereal

CRACKERS – without problem ingredients

GRAIN – amaranth

CAUTION

BREADS – made with unsafe ingredients and/or heavily processed and fortified

CEREALS – heavily preserved, sweetened, heavily fortified, flavored

FLOUR – soy

PASTA – prepared or boxed pasta dishes

RICE – boxed dishes



FATS & NUTS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

NUTS – almonds, cashews, peanuts

BUTTERS – almond, peanut

OILS – canola, coconut, corn, olive, peanut, safflower, sesame, soy

MARGARINE

LARD

SHORTENING

SALAD DRESSING – homemade without problem ingredients

TRY IT

NUTS – macadamia, pecans, walnuts

MAYONNAISE

TAHINI

SEEDS – sunflower seeds

SHORTENING – butter-flavored

CAUTION

NUTS – filberts, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios

OILS – check label

SALAD DRESSINGS – most

IF YOU HAVE NUT OR OTHER FOOD ALLERGIES, TALK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT YOUR SPECIAL DIET NEEDS.



EGGS, MEAT, FISH, & POULTRY

BLADDER FRIENDLY

EGGS

POULTRY – chicken, turkey

FISH

BEEF

SEAFOOD – clams, crabmeat (not canned), lobster, shrimp

LAMB

PORK

PROTEIN POWDER – whey, egg white

VEAL

LIVER – beef or chicken

TRY IT

GARDEN/VEGGIE BURGERS – without soy products

BEEF – corned beef

SANDWICH MEATS – liverwurst, ham (fresh or boiled, without heavy preservatives or flavorings)

BACON

ANCHOVIES

CAVIAR

PROSCIUTTO

SAUSAGES – without problem ingredients

CAUTION

CURED MEATS – bologna, pepperoni, salami, canned crab meat, hot dogs, sausage

SMOKED FISH

SOY PRODUCTS – soy veggie patties, protein powder, tofu

DAIRY, CHEESES, & FROZEN DESSERTS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

CHEESES – American, mozzarella, cheddar (mild), feta, ricotta, string cheeses, cream cheese, cottage cheese

ICE CREAM – most

MILK

MILK SUBSTITUTES – Lactaid®

SHERBET – no citrus or chocolate flavors

WHIPPED CREAM

TRY IT

CHEESES – blue cheese, brie, brick, parmesan, camembert, cheddar (sharp), edam, emmenthaler, gruyere hard jack, Monterey Jack, parmesan (fresh and canned), Roquefort, stilton, Swiss buttermilk

SOUR CREAM – accent on a baked potato or soup

PIZZA – plain, chicken and garlic, veggie, made with white sauce

SORBET

YOGURT – blueberry, vanilla, plain

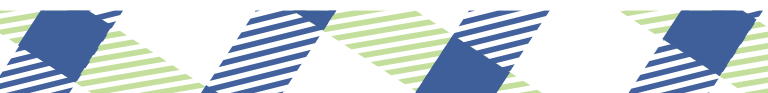
CAUTION

CHEESES – processed, CheezWhiz®

ICE CREAM – citrus or chocolate flavors

SOY PRODUCTS – soy milk, soy cheeses

PIZZA – pepperoni



FRUITS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

APPLES – Gala, Fuji, Pink Lady

APPLESAUCE – homemade with Gala, Fuji, or Pink Lady apples

BLUEBERRIES

COCONUT – without preservatives

DATES – without preservatives

PEARS

WATERMELON

TRY IT

APPLESAUCE – commercial or baby

APRICOTS

BANANAS

BERRIES – blackberries, raspberries, olallieberries, cherimoya

CHERRIES – fresh, maraschino

CITRUS PEELS

CURRENTS

FIGS

MANGO

MELON – Crenshaw, honeydew

PEACHES

PLUMS

RAISINS – brown

RHUBARB

CAUTION

BERRIES – cranberries

CITRUS – lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit

DRIED FRUIT – with preservatives

GRAPES

GUAVA

KIWI FRUIT

MELONS – cantaloupe

NECTARINES

PASSION FRUIT

PAPAYA

PERSIMMON

PINEAPPLE

STARFRUIT

STRAWBERRIES

RAISINS – golden

VEGETABLES & DRIED BEANS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

ASPARAGUS
AVOCADO
BEANS – black eyed peas, garbanzo, lentils, pinto, white, most dried beans
BEETS
BROCCOLI
BRUSSELS SPROUTS
CABBAGE
CARROTS
CAULIFLOWER
CELERY
CHIVES
CORN
CUCUMBER
EGGPLANT
GREEN BEANS
GREENS – collard greens, kale, mustard greens,

okra, swiss chard, spinach, bok choy
LETTUCE AND MOST SALAD GREENS
MUSHROOMS
OLIVES – black
PARSLEY
PEAS – green, snow peas, split peas
BELL PEPPERS – yellow, orange, red
POTATOES– white, yams
PUMPKIN
RADISHES
RHUBARB
RUTABAGA
SQUASH – summer, winter, zucchini
TURNIPS

TRY IT

BEANS – fava, kidney beans, lima beans, black beans
BELL PEPPERS – green
OLIVES – green
GREENS – chicory, dandelion greens, purslane, turnip greens

LEEKS (COOKED)
ONIONS – white, red, cooked bulb onion, raw green
TOMATOES – homegrown, low acid
WATERCRESS

CAUTION

CHILI PEPPERS
ONIONS – raw bulb onions
PICKLES
SAUERKRAUT

SOY BEANS – edamame, roasted
TOMATO – tomato sauces, tomato juice
TOFU

SNACKS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

ALMONDS

CARROTS

CELERY

CHIPS – corn, potato (plain)

CRACKERS – soda or soup

FRUIT BARS – blueberry, pear

MILKSHAKE – vanilla

OATMEAL BARS

PEANUTS

PEANUT BUTTER

POPCORN

PRETZELS – plain

TRY IT

DONUTS – glazed, old fashioned

GRAHAM CRACKERS

FRUIT AND NUT BARS – with safe ingredients

LICORICE

PIZZA – plain, chicken and garlic, veggie, made with white sauce

CAUTION

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

– acesulfame K, aspartame, Nutrasweet®, saccharine, Sweet-N-Low®, stevia

CANDY – red hot-type cinnamon

CHOCOLATE – cocoa, milk, bittersweet, dark

ICE CREAM – chocolate, coffee, rocky road

SORBETS – with problem fruits

PASTRIES – with problem fruits

PIE – pecan, mincemeat

PIZZA – pepperoni

DESSERTS – with problem nuts

FRUITCAKES

SOUPS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

HOMEMADE SOUP AND STOCK – from okay meats and vegetables

TRY IT

SOUPS – canned, low sodium, organic soups (without problem ingredients)

CAUTION

BOUILLON – cubes, powder

CANNED – most

PACKAGED SOUPS – most



CONDIMENTS, SEASONINGS, & FLAVOR ENHANCERS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

ALLSPICE
ALMOND
EXTRACT
ANISE
BASIL
CARAWAY
SEED
CORIANDER

DILL
FENNEL
GARLIC
MACE
MARJORAM
OREGANO
POPPY SEED

ROSEMARY
SAGE
SALT (in small
quantities)
THYME
TARRAGON
VANILLA
EXTRACT

TRY IT

BLACK PEPPER
CELERY SEED
CILANTRO
CINNAMON –
(powdered)
CITRIC ACID – in
small quantities
CUMIN (small
amount)
DRIED PARSLEY

DRIED CHERVIL
GINGER
LEMON EXTRACT
LEMON ZEST
MAYONNAISE
MALT POWDER
NUTMEG
ONION POWDER
ORANGE EXTRACT
TURMERIC

CAUTION

ASCORBIC ACID
AUTOLYZED YEAST
BHA AND BHT
BENZOATES
CATSUP (ketchup)
CAYENNE
CLOVES
CHILI POWDER
HORSERADISH
HOT CURRY POWDER
HYDROLYZED PROTEIN
MEAT TENDERIZERS
MISO

MUSTARD
OLEORESIN PAPRIKA
PAPRIKA
PICKLES
RED PEPPER
SOY SAUCE
TAMARI
VINEGAR
WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE
MSG – monosodium
glutamate
METABISULFITES
SULFITES

FIBER SUPPLEMENTS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

ACACIA FIBER

BENEFIBER®

METAMUCIL® – plain psyllium

BULK PSYLLIUM FIBER – not sugar free

TRY IT

COLACE®

METAMUCIL® – cinnamon wafers

CAUTION

METAMUCIL® – orange, berry burst

PSYLLIUM FIBER – sugar-free due to the presence of artificial sweeteners

SENNA



DESSERTS & SWEETS

BLADDER FRIENDLY

BERRIES – blueberries

CAKE – homemade pound cake, angel food, homemade white/yellow cakes, carrot

FROSTINGS – homemade vanilla frosting, homemade caramel frosting, carob, whipped cream

CAROB

COOKIES – oatmeal, shortbread, sugar

MUFFINS – carrot

CHEESECAKE
CREME BRÛLÉE
CUSTARDS

PIE – custard, cream pie, homemade apple pie (with safe apples), pumpkin pie, divinity

SWEET BREADS – homemade zucchini bread

CANDY – licorice

MAPLE SYRUP
PASTRIES – plain, almond, pear

ICE CREAM – peppermint, vanilla

PUDDING – tapioca, vanilla, rice

MILKSHAKE – vanilla

SWEETENERS – brown sugar, honey, sugar

TRY IT

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS – Splenda® (sucralose)

CANDY – caramel

CHOCOLATE – white

ICE CREAM – caramel, coconut, mango, peppermint, butter pecan

SORBET – coconut

PASTRIES – blueberry, cinnamon

POPSICLES – some

SWEET BREAD – banana

YOGURT – frozen

CAUTION

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS – acesulfame K, aspartame, Nutrasweet®, saccharine, Sweet-N-Low®, stevia

CANDY – red hot-type cinnamon

CHOCOLATE – cocoa, milk, bittersweet, dark

ICE CREAM – chocolate, coffee, rocky road

SORBETS – with problem fruits

PASTRIES – with problem fruits

PIE – pecan, mincemeat

DESSERTS – with problem nuts

FRUITCAKES



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Changing Lives.

About the ICA

The Interstitial Cystitis Association (ICA) is the only non-profit charitable organization dedicated to improving the quality of healthcare and lives of people living with interstitial cystitis (IC).

Mission

Conquering IC. Changing Lives. The ICA provides advocacy, research funding, and education to ensure early diagnosis and optimal care with dignity for people affected by IC.

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Help us fund our greatest need. Contribute online at www.ichelp.org/annualfund

The information provided by the ICA is designed to support, not replace, the relationship that exists between an individual and his/her healthcare provider.

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