



IC Diet Suggestions

Milk/Dairy Products

AVOID

aged cheeses, sour cream, yogurt and chocolate

OK TO TRY

white chocolate, non-aged cheeses such as cottage or American, frozen yogurt and milk

Vegetables

AVOID

fava beans, lima beans, onions, tofu, soy beans & soy-based products, and tomatoes

OK TO TRY

other vegetables, beans, green onions/chives, and home grown tomatoes (which may be less acidic)

Fruits

AVOID

apples, apricots, avocados, bananas, cantaloupes, citrus fruits, cranberries, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pineapples, plums, pomegranates, rhubarb, strawberries and juices made from these fruits

OK TO TRY

melons (other than cantaloupes), blueberries and pears

Carbohydrates and Grains

AVOID

rye and sourdough bread

OK TO TRY

other breads, pasta, potatoes and rice

Meats and Fish

AVOID

aged, canned, cured, processed or smoked meats and fish, anchovies, caviar, chicken livers, corned beef, and meats that contain nitrates or nitrites

OK TO TRY

other poultry, fish and meat

Nuts

AVOID

most nuts

OK TO TRY

almonds, cashews and pine nuts

Beverages

AVOID

alcoholic beverages (including beer and wine); carbonated drinks such as sodas; coffee or tea; and fruit juices, especially citrus or cranberry juice

OK TO TRY

non-carbonated bottled water, decaffeinated, acid-free coffee and tea, and some herbal teas

Seasonings

AVOID

mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, salsa, spicy foods (especially such ethnic foods as Chinese, Indian, Mexican and Thai), soy sauce, miso, other soy-based condiments, salad dressing and vinegar, including balsamic and flavored vinegars

OK TO TRY

garlic and other seasonings

Preservatives and Additives

AVOID

benzyl alcohol, citric acid, monosodium glutamate (MSG), artificial sweeteners such as aspartame (NutraSweet) and saccharine, foods containing preservatives and artificial ingredients and colors.

Miscellaneous

AVOID

tobacco, caffeine, diet pills, junk foods, recreational drugs, cold and allergy medications containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, and certain vitamins.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Learn to read labels. Ordinarily, the fewer ingredients in a product, the safer it is likely to be.
- Add a pinch of salt to carbonated beverages to make them flat.
- Boil down all sauces containing alcohol.
- Try reduced-acid orange juice now available in supermarkets.
- Try Prelief®, a dietary supplement containing calcium glycerophosphate, which has been shown in research studies on IC patients to help reduce bladder pain and urinary urgency when used with acidic foods and beverages. For more information, call 1-800-994-4711 or go to www.prelief.com.
- • Desert Harvest® Whole-Leaf Aloe Vera capsules have been shown in a clinical trial to reduce the pain, frequency, and urgency associated with interstitial cystitis, painful bladder syndrome, chronic pelvic pain, and nonbacterial prostatitis. Capsules

are made in a special concentration not available in your local health food store brands. For full study results check www.desertharvest.com or call 800-222-3901 for more information and a free sample.

What If I Have Eaten Something I Shouldn't Have?

If you have eaten an irritating food or tried a new dish only to discover afterwards that it has brought on symptoms, take one teaspoon of baking soda in a glass of water. This helps to alkalinize the urine and prevent the acids in urine from irritating the bladder. Some patients take baking soda as a preventative before consuming problematic foods. Those who have heart conditions, high blood pressure, or other medical conditions affected by salt intake should consult their doctors before taking baking soda because of its high salt content. If you have a flare in symptoms after eating, you should also drink plenty of water to dilute the urine.

Making the changes necessary in the diet to help control IC is a challenge, as are so many aspects of this disease. Don't get discouraged if you do not discover your ideal diet even after a few weeks of trial and error. The process takes time and patience, but if you are like many others with IC, it may pay off in a reduction in your symptoms.

What About Vitamins and Supplements?

Unfortunately, there is not one line of vitamins that works for all IC patients. Little to no research has been conducted in this area. In fact, if you are going to take vitamins, it is suggested that you purchase individual vitamins separately, as opposed to buying multivitamins. This way you can better control what you are consuming.

1. Vitamin C, because it is acidic, can cause IC flares. Ester-C, a pH balanced (acid-neutralized) version of C, may be an option for IC patients. It was originally developed for people with stomach problems. However, start out with small doses. Some IC patients are so sensitive that they cannot even tolerate Ester-C.
2. The B-Complex vitamins, for reasons not clearly understood, can also cause problems with IC. You may want to try taking B vitamins individually, instead of a B-complex formula.
3. The fat soluble vitamins (A, D E, and K) should pose no problems. Minerals, such as calcium and magnesium, are also usually well-tolerated by most IC patients.
4. Again, it is probably best to purchase vitamin supplements separately, instead of in a multivitamin formula.