

ICN FOOD LIST

For Interstitial Cystitis, Bladder Pain
Syndrome, GSM & Hunner's Lesions



icnetwork.org



Understanding the IC Diet

Diet modification is a critical first step in gaining control over your symptoms and reducing inflammation. The challenge is that you're probably getting a LOT of mixed messages as you are cruising the web, social media and talking with other patients. This guide should answer many of your questions.

How do foods irritate the bladder?

When you have an injured, infected or estrogen atrophied bladder, urine can penetrate deeply into the bladder wall where it causes irritation and inflammation.

Is every IC patient diet sensitive? How long are they on the diet?

No. There are distinct groups (i.e. phenotypes) in the IC patient population, each with their own treatments and diet sensitivities. (Visit icnetwork.org to learn more about the new phenotyping systems.)

- Patients with **Hunner's lesions** have the most severe food reactivity because they have open wounds (now believed to be viral infections) in their bladders that are very sensitive. They may be on the diet for an extended period, until the lesions are treated and/or have healed. Some of these patients may benefit from working with a registered dietitian.
- Patients with **Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause** (aka estrogen atrophy) have less protective mucus in their bladder. GSM is not a disease. It's just a slow but steady decline in estrogen that affects their bladder, urethra, vulva and vagina. These patients may develop more food sensitivities as they age, especially to coffee, black and green teas.
- **Pelvic floor dysfunction** patients can struggle with temporary food sensitivity until their muscles have healed and blood flow is restored to their bladder. They may need to follow the diet for several months before gradually introducing more risky foods.
- Patients with **widespread pain** often have very sensitive nerves. They often struggle with (and avoid) caffeine products and chocolate throughout their lifetime.

What's wrong with having one cup of coffee a day?

One cup of coffee per day or other acidic drink physically prevents the bladder wall from healing. How? The bladder is the slowest healing

organ in the human body because it contains the largest single cells. When one of the "umbrella" cells of the bladder wall is damaged, it takes two weeks for it to be replaced by an underlying stem cell. Unfortunately, that small, developing cell is very vulnerable to acid. Literally, one cup of coffee or soda can destroy an entire generation of stem cells trying to repair your bladder wall. Avoiding irritating foods helps to soothe and protect your bladder while it is healing. This is why we strongly encourage all patients to avoid coffees, teas and sodas for three months for at least three months. The goal? To give your bladder time to heal.

What can I drink in place of coffee?

We suggest trying **Dandy Blend®** herbal coffee which is naturally low in acid and caffeine free. An instant coffee, it makes great lattes and frappuccino. It's available at: icnsales.com

When can I try real coffee again?

If your bladder is tolerating herbal coffee well, you could try a small amount of a real coffee. We suggest doing a low acid, decaf coffee first, such as **Bella Rosa Organic** coffees. Try half a cup, perhaps with some creamer to balance out the acid and monitor your symptoms. If you don't notice an increase in urination at night or more pain, try progressing to one cup. You could also try a half-caf coffee to see if caffeine still bothers you.

What can I drink in place of black or green tea?

Try chamomile or peppermint herbal teas which also happen to have a nice antispasmodic effect on the bladder and bowel. If you want a richer flavor, look for rooibos teas. Some patients have found marshmallow root tea soothing as well. We have a wonderful Pumpkin Spice Rooibos tea that many patients enjoy.

Is cranberry bladder friendly?

No. Cranberry juice is so acidic that we call it the "acid bomb".

Is fast food bladder friendly?

Fast, manufactured and packaged foods usually contain high amounts of sugar, salt and preservatives which promote inflammation. If you are looking for a quick meal, we suggest ordering a simple turkey sandwich.

Is alcohol bladder friendly?

Generally, no. There are some low acid beers (pale ales) wines (lower acid chardonnay and merlot), ciders (pear, apple, berry) and hard liquors (sake, vodka) that are more bladder friendly. Of course, all alcohol should be avoided by anyone struggling with active lesions and painful flares. We offer several suggestions in our comprehensive diet list.

Can I eat fruit?

Yes. Pears are considered the most bladder friendly, along with lower in acid varieties of apples (Gala & Fuji). Bananas have been found to be more soothing to the bladder though some do report flares. Melons are generally well tolerated while citrus, of course, is not. Please avoid all citrus fresh fruit and juices.

Why can some patients eat some foods while others can't?

Patients often have their own individual sensitivities based upon their phenotype. Your job is to create a list unique to you. It may be helpful to do an elimination diet to find your best foods. Learn how to do an elimination diet on our website (icnetwork.org).

Why are there different diet lists?

We share two lists to help you on your journey. On this page, we offer foods that research studies have found to be “*more bothersome*” and “*less bothersome*.” We suggest removing the foods in Table 1 for at least 3 to 6 months. The foods in Table 2 are more bladder friendly.

The **ICN Food List** is much more comprehensive and is based on both research studies and patient experiences. It will allow you to find IC friendly versions of some of your favorite foods.

“**Bladder Friendly Foods**” are those which most patients tolerate well.

“**Foods Worth Trying Cautiously**” are generally safe though they may irritate more sensitive bladders. Try in small quantities first.

“**Foods to Avoid**” are those well known for triggering flares.

Foods with a (+) sign can be soothing during an IC flare.

*Friedlander J. et al. Diet and its role in interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome (IC/BPS) and comorbid conditions. BJU International. BJU Int. 2012 Jan 11.

Table 1 - Most Bothersome Foods*	
Coffee (caffeinated) Coffee (decaffeinated) Tea (caffeinated) Cola carbonated beverage Non-cola carbonated beverage Diet carbonated beverage Caffeine-free carbonated beverage Beer Red Wine White Wine Champagne Grapefruit Lemon Orange Pineapple Cranberry juice Grapefruit juice	Orange juice Pineapple juice Tomato Tomato products Hot peppers Spicy foods Chili Horseradish Vinegar Monosodium glutamate (MSG) NutraSweet Sweet 'N Low Equal (sweetener) Saccharin Mexican food Thai food Indian food
Table 2 - Least Bothersome Foods*	
Water Milk, low-fat Milk, whole Bananas Blueberries Honeydew melon Pears Raisins Watermelon Broccoli Brussels Sprouts Cabbage Carrots Cauliflower Celery Cucumber Mushrooms Peas Radishes	Squash Zucchini White potatoes Sweet potatoes/yams Chicken Eggs Turkey Beef Pork Lamb Shrimp Tuna fish Salmon Oat Rice Pretzels Popcorn

Beverages (Coffee, Tea, Juice, Alcohol)

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Non-Dairy Creamers	creamers without soybean oil	Mocha Mix® for patients not sensitive to soy	artificially flavored creamers, such as coffee, chocolate, mocha or cherry
Beers & Ales		light lagers, light hybrid beers, light ales	brown ales, stout, hard cider, german white or rye beer, belgian or french ale, brown ales
Coffees		herbal coffees (Dandy Blend, Pero, Cafix, Kaffree Roma) or low acid decaf coffees (Bella Rosa, Simpatico, Puroast or Tyler's)	traditional coffees (regular & decaf) should be avoided due to their high acid and/or caffeine content
Drink Powders		white hot chocolate mixes	Kool-aid®, lemonade, orange, and all powdered chocolate and sweet tea drinks
Eggnog	fresh eggnog without alcohol		eggnog with coffee or strong alcohol
Hard Cider		apple, pear, berry – ideally served with ice to dilute the alcohol	pineapple, citrus flavors
Italian Sodas	blueberry, coconut, pear made with low sodium mineral water	raspberry, blackberry, strawberry, root beer, peach, watermelon	cola, lemon, lime, orange, chocolate, coffee using high sodium mineral waters
Juices	blueberry & pear	baby apple or grape juices, low acid orange juice, some “organic” adult apple juices	cranberry, lemonade, limeade, grapefruit, regular orange, tomato and acai juices
Liquors & Spirits		sake, scotch, brandy, bourbon, gin, rum, vodka	whiskey, liqueurs, tequila
Milk	regular, low fat, non-fat, lactaid	goat's milk	chocolate, soy
Milk Substitutes	almond and rice milks	regular non-dairy creamers, such as Mocha Mix	soybean based, chocolate or mocha flavors
Milkshakes	vanilla, coconut and caramel are usually bladder friendly	blueberry, peach or other IC friendly fruits	chocolate, coffee and mocha shakes
Mixers	water, low acid sparkling water (San Pellegrino), milk, cream, egg nog	blueberry juice, peach juice, pomegranate juice, apple juice, root beer	lime juice, lemon juice, lemonade, cola, lemon sodas, tomato juice
Rice Dream®	vanilla	carob almond, mint carob chip	chocolate
Soft Drinks & Sodas		caffeine free root beer with ice may be attempted once or twice a month	all colas, sugar or diet, energy drinks, all citrus, mountain, ginger, guarana, strawberry
Teas	chamomile+ and peppermint+ herbal teas	alfalfa, roasted carob, marshmallow root, licorice root, roobios	hot, iced or sweet regular and decaf black tea, green tea
Water	tap or bottled	“essence” waters without sweeteners, colorings or artificial flavors	carbonated, “sparkling,” vitamin, flavored and/or heavily filtered water
Wine - White	None	Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc	Champagne, Sparkling Wines, Gewurztraminer, Muscat, Semillion
Wine - Red		Merlot, Pinot noir, Cabernet, Syrah	Sangiovese, Zinfandel, Port

Grains, Breads & Pastries

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Amaranth		amaranth - grain, cereal	
Breads	corn+, oat+, pita, potato+, white+, Italian sweet, whole wheat	rye, pumpernickel, sourdough breads - Ezekiel bread is popular for its high fiber and protein but could bother soy sensitive patients	bread made with unsafe ingredients and/or heavily processed and fortified
Breads - sweet	homemade zucchini bread+, pumpkin bread, apple bread	banana, carob chips	cranberry, chocolate chips
Cakes	homemade pound, angel food, white+, yellow+	organic cake mixes, carrot cake without problem ingredients	chocolate, commercial mixes that use artificial colorings and flavorings
Cereals	oatmeal, oat, rice and fiber without problem ingredients	Ezekiel Cereal, Fiber-One, Kashi Go-Lean, Grape Nuts, Cheerios, Kix	heavily preserved, sweetened, flavored, chocolate
Crackers	matzo, soda, soup, stone ground wheat, rice		strongly spiced crackers
Flours	buckwheat, wheat, rice, corn		soy
Fruitcakes		Homemade fresh fruitcakes without alcohol, such as: apple	whiskey, alcohol, rum, risky dried fruits, risky nuts
Muffins	oatmeal, carrot, bran, apple, corn, pumpkin, blueberry	cinnamon, raspberry, blackberry, banana	chocolate, chocolate chip, cranberry, orange, lemon poppyseed
Noodles & Pasta	wheat, rice, corn, quinoa	pesto, carbonara, clam, alfredo	tomato, premade pasta dishes with heavy flavorings and/or preservatives
Pastries	plain, almond, pear, custard, pumpkin	blueberry, cinnamon	chocolate and/or problem fruits
Pie	custard, cream pie, homemade apple pie (with safe apples), pumpkin pie	peach pie, banana cream	pecan, mincemeat, key lime, lemon meringue, chocolate
Quinoa	flour, pasta, bread, cereal		
Rice	short grain, long grain, basmati, wild		cajun, spicy boxed products
Specialty Grains	couscous, grits, millet, quinoa+, spelt	amaranth	
Tortillas	corn, flour		
Wheat Flour	all purpose, bread, buckwheat, cake, pastry, semolina, whole-wheat		

Spices

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Allspice		ground or grated	
Almond Extract	look for organic, higher quality extracts		
Anise	ground & pods		
Baking Powder & Soda	double or single acting powder, soda		

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Basil	fresh, flakes, infused olive oil	pesto sauce	
Caraway		seeds	
Cayenne			cayenne
Celery Seed		ground	
Chervil		dried chervil	
Chili Powder			ground chili powder
Chives	fresh, dried		
Cilantro		fresh, dried	
Cinnamon		ceylon cinnamon	chinese cassia cinnamon
Citrus Peel		fresh or dried citrus peel	candied citrus peels
Cloves			ground, whole
Coriander	ground		
Cumin		ground	
Curry		mild curry powder	hot curry powder
Dill	fresh, dried		
Fennel	fresh, dried		
Lard	lard		
Lemon extract		organic, lemon extract	
Mace	ground		
Malt Powder		preservative free	
Marjoram	fresh, dried+		
Miso			powder, liquid
Nutmeg		ground	
Onion Powder		organic white, yellow, red, toasted	
Orange Extract		organic extract in very small quantities	
Oregano	fresh, dried		
Paprika		rom bell peppers	from chili peppers, oleoresin paprika
Parsley	fresh or dried		
Pepper	fresh	black, white, green powders	cayenne, pink, sichuan powders
Poppy Seed	poppy seeds, muffins, cakes		
Rosemary	fresh, dried		
Sage	sage+ fresh, dried		
Salt	table, sea, iodized, kosher, celtic in small quantities	coarse in small quantities	rock, seasoned
Tahini		tahini sauce in a small quantity	
Tamari			tamari sauce
Tarragon	fresh, dried		
Thyme	fresh, dried		
Turmeric		ground	
Vanilla	extract, bean pods		

Vitamins & Supplements

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Acacia Fiber – a soluble fiber for IBS patients	powdered, unflavored		
Acidophilous – restores the biome after antibiotic use	acidophilous capsules		
Aloe - to calm and soothe the bladder during flares	AloePath®, Desert Harvest Aloe capsules		Be cautious of aloe drinks that may contain citrus acid and other preservatives.
Ascorbic Acid		low acid ester C	ascorbic acid
Calcium	calcium citrate or carbonate tablets		
Chondroitin Formulas – to protect and coat the bladder	Bladder Rest®, Bladder Builder®, CystoMend®, CystoProtek®		
Colonoscopy Preps	MiraLAX® protocol with water	MiraLAX® protocol with clear, green or blue Gatorade®	
Fibers	bulk acacia fiber (Heather's Tummy Fiber™), bulk psyllium fiber (Benefiber®, Metamucil Clear & Natural®)	Metamucil® Cinnamon Wafers	orange, lemon or berry flavors, products containing artificial sugar and orange flavoring
Fish Oil	capsules, liquid without citrus		fish oils using lemon or other citrus flavors
Flax Seed Oil		capsules	
Folic Acid		tablets	
Lactoferrin - anti-inflammatory effect found to improve bladder wall and reduce inflammation	capsules, powder		
Multivitamin (Low Acid)	Bladder Smart® capsules		
Palmitoylethanolamide (PEA) – nerve calming effect ideal to reduce pain	Peaora® capsules		
Quercetin – has an antihistaminic effect in the bladder			
Senna - not recommended			teas, pills
Stool Softeners	polyethylene glycol products - Miralax®	docusate products	
Tums®	Tums® - Peppermint	Tums® - Tropical Fruit, Assorted Fruit flavors	sugar free and citrus flavors
UTI Products		PRVNT®, Ellura®	There are too many cranberry products on the market to list.
Vitamins (Bottled)	A, B1, B2, B12, D, E, K	low acid Ester C	Vitamin C & B6

Snacks & Sweets

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Almonds	unsalted, organic, raw, roasted or almond butter	lightly seasoned, candied, caramel or carob covered almonds	chocolate covered, heavily seasoned with “hot” chili flavoring and spices
Candy	carob, caramel, mint, butterscotch, divinity	licorice, white chocolate, cotton, mild gums (sugar based)	red hot-type cinnamons, sour candy, most sugar-free candy and gums. Xylitol and other sugar alcohols have been linked to strokes.
Carob	chips, powder, candy		
Cheesecake	plain, vanilla bean, blueberry, peppermint, caramel, dulce de leche, pumpkin	dutch apple	chocolate, mocha, lemon, key lime, strawberry
Chips	corn or potato chips - plain		strongly seasoned or salty chips, such as barbecue, buffalo wing, jalapeno, sweet chili, salt & vinegar, red hot, cheddar & sour cream
Chocolate	carob is a bladder friendly substitute	white or a very high quality dark chocolate	milk, bittersweet, cocoa powder
Cookies	oatmeal+ , shortbread, sugar+, carob chip, mexican wedding, biscotti, almond	snickerdoodles, peanut butter	chocolate chip, cranberry
Divinity	vanilla, peppermint		
Frostings	homemade vanilla, buttercream, caramel, carob frostings and whipped cream	vanilla frosting mixes	most canned frostings contain high amounts of preservatives, sweeteners and artificial flavorings
Fruit & Nut Bars	blueberry, pear	almond, peanut, coconut, apple, blueberry, Kind Bars – coconut, almond)	cranberry, tart grape, chocolate
Gum	sugar based, mint or licorice flavors		gums with most artificial sweeteners, hot spicy flavors, citrus flavors
Licorice		black, raspberry, cherry licorice	
Maple Syrup	homemade or authentic maple syrup		all imitation syrups - regular, lite or sugar free
Nut Butters	organic almond or peanut		
Nuts	almonds, cashews, peanuts	macadamia, pecans, walnuts	salted or hot spiced nuts
Oatmeal Bars	oatmeal bars without problem ingredients		chocolate, cranberry
Peanut Butter	organic, natural peanut butters		
Peanuts	raw, roasted, unsalted, lightly salted, peanut butter		heavily spiced, salted, or coated with chocolate
Pizza	plain, mild cheese, mushroom, veggie made without red sauce	plain, chicken & garlic, veggie, ham, alfredo sauce, creamy garlic sauce, basil pesto sauce	pepperoni, hot sausage, marinara sauce, bbq sauce, chili pepper flakes
Popcorn	homemade	“all natural” microwaveable popcorn with no added flavors, preservatives or colors	microwaveable packages heavily spiced (i e jalapeno, kettle corn, spicy nacho, etc)
Popsicles	coconut, vanilla, carob	banana, blueberry, mango and raspberry	chocolate, lemon, orange, lime

Pretzels	plain, unsalted	lightly salted	heavily spiced or salted
Puddings	tapioca, vanilla+, rice+, coconut, creme brulee	butterscotch, banana	chocolate
Seeds		organic, unsalted or lightly salted sunflower, pumpkin, sesame seeds	heavily seasoned, hot spiced, salty
Snack Cakes	homemade vanilla, pound or carrot cakes		fast food snack cakes
Sweeteners+	brown sugar, white sugar, honey+	Splenda® (sucralose), Truvia® (stevia), xylitol	acesulfame K, aspartame, Nutrasweet®, saccharine, Sweet-N-Low®, Stevia, sugar alcohols

Condiments, Dressings, Oils & Soup

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Catsup and Ketchup		used in small quantities	used in large quantities
Mayonnaise		regular and olive oil mayonnaise	
Mustard		mild, sweet flavors	hot, spicy, alcohol infused flavors
Oils	almond, canola, coconut, corn, olive, peanut, safflower, sesame, herb infused olive oils	Soybean oil can bother some patients. Try it cautiously!	
Pickles			sweet or dill
Salad Dressing	some homemade salad dressings (i.e. ranch dressing), herb infused olive oils	“organic” brand name dressings without problem ingredients or spices (i.e. Marie’s)	oil & vinegar, dressings with strong “hot” spices
Shortening	Shortenings, such as coconut	Soybean oil based products	
Soups - Bouillon	homemade chicken, beef or vegetable bouillon or stock		bouillon cubes, powder
Soups - Canned		organic and/or reduced salt canned soups	brand name soups high in salt and/or have problem ingredients
Soups - Homemade	homemade chicken, beef, turkey, squash, pea, bean, carrot, potato, corn		tomato soup, minestrone made with heavy tomato sauce, hot chili
Soups - Packaged			most instant or prepackaged soups
Soy Sauce		low salt soy sauce (in small quantities)	soy sauce
Vinegar			white, apple cider, red wine, balsamic
Worcestershire Sauce			worcestershire sauce - all brands

Food Additives

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Citric acid		very small quantities when used as a preservative for some canned foods	large quantities or when used as a flavoring (i.e. most sodas)
MSG & Misc. Additives			monosodium glutamate, modified food starch, hydrolyzed proteins, sodium

			caseinate, yeast extract, autolyzed yeast
Meat Tenderizers			these usually contain MSG and high salt
Preservatives			BHA, BHT, benzoates, citric acid, metabisulfite, sulfite

Dairy

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Butter and Margarine	real butter, sweetened or unsweetened	Soybean, oil based margarines	
Buttermilk		fresh - try a small amount first to see if you tolerate it well	
Cheese	American, mozzarella, cheddar cheese (mild), feta, ricotta+, string cheeses+	blue cheese, brie, brick parmesan, camembert, cheddar cheese (sharp), edam, emmenthaler, gruyere hard jack, Monterey Jack, parmesan (fresh & canned), Roquefort, stilton, Swiss	processed, heavily spiced, cheese in a can products
Cheese Substitutes			tofu and soy cheeses
Cottage Cheese	plain cottage cheese, large curd made with sennet (low acid)	cottage cheese, small curd made without rennet (higher acid)	
Cream Cheese	fresh, plain cream cheese	mildly spiced cream cheeses (i e pumpkin, italian herb, savory garlic)	
Custards	vanilla, coconut, creme brulee		
Eggs	artificial-stimulant-free and veggie-fed eggs, dried or pasteurized egg whites	Egg Beaters	
Ice Cream	peppermint, vanilla+	caramel, coconut, mango, peppermint, almond, butter pecan	chocolate, coffee, rocky road, citrus flavors
Sherbet	vanilla, coconut, peppermint	raspberry, blackberry, melon, mango, strawberry	chocolate or citrus flavors
Sour Cream		sour cream	
Whipped Cream	fresh whip cream, Cool Whip®		
Yogurt		plain, vanilla, blueberry, raspberry, peach or prune flavors	lemon, lime, orange, chocolate or mocha flavors, artificial sugars

Meats

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Bacon	uncured, preservative free turkey or pork bacon	mildly spiced, cured bacon products	heavily cured, preserved, smoked or spiced bacon products
Beef	fresh or frozen roasts, steaks, ground beef & other cuts	mild corned beef	heavily spiced, preserved or prepackaged products

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Chicken	fresh cooked (baked, fried, roasted, sauteed)		“fast food,” prepackaged, heavily spiced chicken tenders
Deli Meats	filler, gluten, color free meats (i.e. Boar’s Head, Hormel Natural)	liverwurst, ham, bologna, mortadella, prosciutto without heavy preservatives or flavorings	heavily spiced, salted, flavored meat products such as salami and pepperoni
Fish	fresh or frozen cod, sole, tilapia, salmon, tuna, anchovies	canned tuna, salmon, anchovies or caviar packed in water	“fast food,” heavily spiced, smoked, preserved or prepackaged products
Garden/Veggie Burgers		fresh, preservative free garden burgers - beware soy sauce flavoring	soy veggie patties
Hot Dogs	uncured, preservative free chicken, turkey, beef or pork hot dogs (i.e. Niman Ranch)	mildly seasoned hot dogs	cured, smoked hot dogs
Lamb	fresh or frozen		heavily spiced, preserved or prepacked lamb products
Liver	beef or chicken liver		
Pork	fresh or frozen	uncured, preservative free hot dogs, bacon and sausage (i.e. Niman Ranch products)	heavily spiced, preserved or cured
Prosciutto		mild with minimal preservatives	
Protein Powder	whey, egg whites		soy powders
Sausages	uncured, preservative free chicken, pork or turkey sausages	mildly spiced sausage or sausage meat, such as mild italian sausage or breakfast sausages	avoid heavily preserved, cured, smoked or spiced s
Seafood	clams, crabmeat (not canned), lobster, shrimp		heavily spiced, preserved or prepacked canned crab meat
Smoked Fish			heavily preserved, salted and/or cured
Turkey & Fowl	turkey, chicken, game hens		heavily cured, preserved, smoked
Veal	fresh or frozen		heavily spiced, preserved

Fruits & Vegetables

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Apples	sweet, mild apples (i.e. Gala, Fuji, Pink Lady), jam, jelly, pies, tarts, juice	sweet Red or Green Delicious apples	sour or very tart apples (i.e. Granny Smith)
Applesauce	homemade applesauce made with Gala, Fuji or Pink Lady apples (organic)	brand name or baby applesauce may include acids or spices that can irritate the bladder	
Apricots		fresh apricots, jam, jelly, pies, tarts, organic dried apricots	apricots treated in sulfur
Artichokes	fresh, steamed & boiled	artichoke hearts marinated in olive oil	artichoke hearts marinated in vinegar
Asparagus	fresh, steamed & boiled		asparagus marinated in vinegar

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	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Avocado	fresh, ice cream, mild guacamole		guacamole with strong, hot, chili spices
Bananas		fresh banana, bread, fritters, ice cream	chocolate covered, banana chips treated with sulfur
Beans	black eyed peas, garbanzo, lentils, pinto, white, most dried beans	fava, kidney beans, lima beans, black beans	
Beets	fresh, steamed, boiled, canned		pickled beets in vinegar
Bell Peppers	yellow, orange and red peppers	green peppers	
Berries	blueberries	blackberries, raspberries, olallieberries	cranberries, strawberries in large quantities
Blueberries	jam, fruit bars, tarts and pies, ice cream		
Broccoli	fresh, frozen, steamed, boiled		
Brussels Sprouts	fresh, frozen, steamed, boiled		
Cabbage	raw or cooked		pickled or sauerkraut
Cantaloupe		fresh - try in small quantities. It is more irritating than other melons	
Carrots	fresh, raw or steamed	carrot cake without problem ingredients	
Cauliflower	fresh, raw or steamed		
Celery	fresh, raw or steamed		
Cherimoya		fresh	
Cherries		fresh cherries, organic maraschino	sour cherries
Chili Peppers			hot, chili pepper flakes, medium or hot salsa, "hot" spiced foods
Citrus Fruits			lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit, clementine
Coconut	flakes (untreated, organic), milk, ice cream, sorbet		coconut treated with metabisulfite
Corn	fresh yellow, white, blue, mixed corn, cornmeal, polenta, grits		
Cranberry			cranberry juice & most supplements.
Cucumber	burpless hybrid, orient express or sweet slice varieties		dill or sweet pickle relish and pickles may include vinegar
Currants		organic fresh or dried currants	
Dates	organic fresh or dried dates		

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	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Dried Fruit		organic dried apples, peaches, apricots, prunes without preservatives	dried fruits with strong preservatives
Eggplant	baked, sauteed		eggplant parmigiana with tomato sauce
Figs		fresh, dried	
Garlic	fresh, dried, powder, infused oil	garlic salt	
Ginger		fresh, dried	
Graham Crackers	organic, plain, honey coated	cinnamon	
Grapes		fresh, sweet organic grapes	tart or bitter grapes
Green Beans	fresh, frozen	canned beans	
Greens	collard greens, kale, mustard greens, okra, swiss chard, spinach, bok choy	chicory, dandelion greens, purslane, turnip greens	
Guava			fresh or preserved guava products
Horseradish			grated, flakes, powder
Kiwi fruit			fresh or preserved kiwi fruit, jams and jelly
Leeks		fresh, usually cooked	
Lettuce & Salad Greens	green leafy, romaine, butterhead, iceberg, looseleaf	bitter salad greens (i e radicchio)	
Mango		fresh or dried mango, juice, jams and jellies	
Melons		crenshaw, honeydew, watermelon	cantaloupe
Mushrooms	button, chantarelle, shiitake, portabello, enoki, truffles		
Nectarines		fresh, very sweet nectarines	sour or tart nectarines
Olives	black olives in water	green olives in water, green olives stuffed with almonds	martini olives marinated in vermouth or stuffed with chili peppers
Onions		white, red, green, pearl, scallions, chives	raw bulb onions
Papaya		fresh or preserved papaya products	
Passion Fruit		fresh or preserved products, juice	
Peaches		fresh peaches, jam, pie, tart, juice	
Pears	juice, fruit bars, jams, canned pears in pear juice		
Peas	green peas+, snow peas, split peas (fresh or dried)		

Learn more about the IC diet and find many IC friendly foods on our website and in the ICN Shop! www.icnetwork.org & www.icnsales.com

	Usually Bladder Friendly	Foods Worth Trying	Foods To Avoid
Persimmon		persimmon fruit	
Pineapple			pineapple fruit and juice
Plums		fresh, sweet, organic dried plums & prunes	
Potato Flakes	organic dried		
Potatoes	white, red, yellow, baking, sweet, yams		
Prunes	fresh plums	organic dried prunes, prune juice (diluted with water)	avoid heavily preserved dried fruit
Pumpkin	fresh, canned, soup, bread, muffins without problem ingredients		
Radishes	fresh		
Raisins		organic, untreated gold or brown	treated gold or brown
Rhubarb	fresh		strawberry & rhubarb pie
Rutabaga	fresh, organic		
Sauerkraut			sauerkraut, pickled cabbage
Sorbet	blueberry, pear, coconut	raspberry, blackberry, mango, peach	lemon, lime, orange
Soy Beans		fresh edamame, roasted	
Soy Products		fresh, unflavored tofu	soy veggie patties, flour protein powder, aged tofu
Squash	summer (zucchini, patty pan, crookneck, yellow) winter (acorn, butternut, patty pan, spaghetti)		
Starfruit		fresh	
Strawberries		fresh, sweet strawberries (in small quantities)	strawberries in large quantities, sour strawberries, jams, jellies, flavorings
Tofu		fresh without preservatives or heavy spices	premade, preserved, flavored varieties
Tomatoes		homegrown, yellow, low acid varieties	tomato sauce, paste, juice
Turnips	fresh, organic		
Watercress		fresh	
Watermelon		fresh	watermelon pickles

Water

Some patients stop drinking water to reduce their frequency and urgency. Unfortunately, this often makes symptoms worse because their urine becomes more concentrated and irritating. If your urine is dark yellow or brown, you are dehydrated. If your urine is clear, you may be drinking too much water. Your urine should be a pale, clear yellow. For most of us, tap water is usually fine however, if you feel discomfort, you can contact your local water organization to ask what the pH is or to have your well water tested. Bottled Spring water (San Pellegrino, Arrowhead, etc.) is the preferred alternative. Please note that some water filters can also produce more acidic water because they remove the pH balancing minerals. We do not encourage drinking alkaline waters which can also create more irritating urine. Keep it simple!

Gluten

A small number of patients have reported that their symptoms worsen when eating gluten. They prefer to eat gluten free breads, pastas, etc. It may be worth experimenting with a gluten free diet for a few weeks to see if that improves your symptoms. Please note, however, that there is no clear connection between celiac disease and IC/BPS. Most IC patients can tolerate gluten.

Artificial Sweeteners

IC patients have long reported flares after consuming most artificial sweeteners, especially aspartame. As a result, artificial sweeteners are never recommended to IC patients. In 2023, the World Health Organization issued guidelines discouraging the use of artificial sweeteners for the purpose of weight loss and the prevention of diabetes. Their consumption has now been linked to weight gain, an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and early death. Significant new research has also emerged which linked sugar alcohols (xylitol, etc.) to blood clots and stroke. Perhaps most alarming is their risk of damaging our gut biome. We suggest using natural sweeteners, such as: honey, maple syrup, molasses and some fruit juices.

Sugar

A diet high in added sugar has been linked to obesity, fatty liver disease, cardiovascular disease, higher levels of inflammation throughout the body and metastatic breast and colon cancer. In contrast, eating sugars found in whole foods and fruits are not any cause for concern. We strongly suggest that you reduce your overall sugar intake for your general health. Even one soda a day has been linked to devastating long-term health problems.

Food Chemicals & Preservatives

One of the biggest criticisms of American food is the use of ingredients, preservatives, artificial sweeteners, dyes, flavorings and additives that have been restricted by other countries for their link to cancer and other conditions, such as

glyphosate (i.e. RoundUp®). There are simply too many to list in this document. As a rule, we encourage you to avoid fast food, premanufactured and packaged foods that are often filled with these chemicals.

- Only eat organic oats and grains.
- Consider using flours sourced from Europe.
- Buy organic crackers and cookies or consider products from Europe.
- When possible, buy organic fruits and vegetables
- Choose whole wheat rather than white flour products.

If you are interested in learning more on this topic, please visit:

<http://www.ewg.org/>

Summary

#1 – The purpose of the IC diet is to prevent irritation and support healing of any injured tissue.

#2 – Every IC patient may have different food tolerances based upon your phenotype. Your job is to find the foods which work the best for you.

#3 – Foods high in acid, alkalinity, caffeine or alcohol are well known to trigger painful flares.

#4 – Drinking one cup of coffee, green tea or soda a day (or even a week) could prevent the bladder from healing. We suggest following the diet for at least three months to allow your bladder to recover.

#5 – Start your journey with the smaller research-based lists.

#6 – When you are ready to try more foods, use our larger list to research your favorite foods and ingredients for more bladder friendly variations.

#7 - When in doubt, eat real foods rather than manufactured foods.

#8 - When possible, try to eat organic fruits, vegetables and grains to avoid chemical and pesticide contamination.

#9 – If your food sensitivities progressively worsen over time, please talk with your doctor. They may need to examine your bladder more closely and/or rule out other conditions which could be worsening your symptoms, such as a recurrence of Hunner's lesions.

From Our Mail Order Center - icnsales.com

All proceeds are dedicated to our IC educational and support services.

Websites & Books:

IC Diet Project – icdietproject.com

IC101: It's Not Just A Bladder Disease – Jill Osborne MA

The IC Chef Cookbook – Jill Osborne MA

Confident Choices: Customizing the IC Diet - Julie Beyer RD

Confident Choices: A Cookbook for IC & OAB - Julie Beyer RD

Coaching Services

Do you have a questions about IC and diet? The ICN offers personal coaching services. \$50 per 30-minute session. Sign up at: <http://www.icnsales.com/wellness-coaching/> or by calling (707)538-9442.

Supplements:

Preliet®, **Bladder Rest®**, **Bladder Builder®**, **CystoMend®**, **CystoProtek®** - Find many more supplements on our site.

Low Acid Coffees:

Bella Rosa Low Acid Coffees – Regular, Half Caf & Decaf
Tyler's Acid Free Coffee

Herbal Coffees:

Dandy Blend – The BEST herbal coffee on the market today. Caffeine free and low acid, you can make lattes, frappuccinos and more with this easy, flavorful instant coffee. It tastes great!

Fruit Products:

Colorado Mtn Low Acid Jams - *Pear, Apple Pie, Blueberry, Peach*

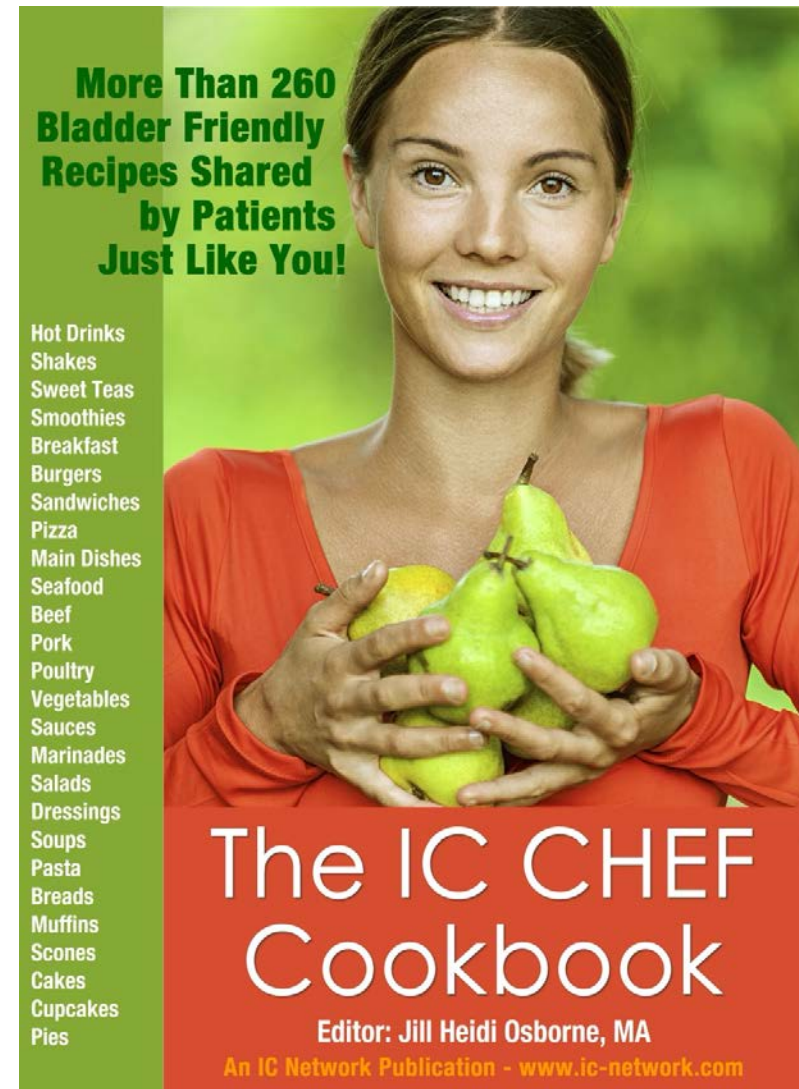
Fiber:

Heathers Tummy - Acacia Fiber for patients who suffer from irritable bowel, constipation, dysbiosis or a sensitive gut.

ICN Memberships & IC Optimist Patient Magazine

Educational Website: www.ic-network.com - 707.538.9442

Mail Order Website: www.icnsales.com - 707.433.0413



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The IC CHEF Cookbook

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