

Advanced Urogynecologic Care

Dr. Janet Tomezsko

Tel (224) 251-7387

Bladder Diet

For some patients with 'overactive bladder' or other irritative or painful bladder conditions, basic changes to the diet can help to reduce symptoms. Foods and beverages that make the urine more acidic, for instance, are likely to increase urinary urgency and frequency by irritating inflamed areas of the bladder or urethra. Perhaps the most significant bladder irritants are alcohol, caffeinated beverages, and carbonated beverages.

To determine which foods or beverages, if any, might be affecting your bladder symptoms, we recommend the following:

1. Review the potential "triggers" listed below. Circle items that you tend to eat or drink.
2. An "elimination diet" involves avoiding the circled foods for around 3 weeks. After that period, try adding the eliminated items back into your diet, one at a time. Each time you eat or drink one of the listed items, pay attention to patterns in your symptoms. If your symptoms seem to flare up after eating or drinking a certain food or beverage, eliminate it from your diet. If your symptoms do not get worse, you should be able to continue consuming the item without problems.
3. Alternatively, if the "elimination diet" is too difficult, you could just try one-by-one elimination of possible triggers, while observing for improvement of your symptoms each time you make a change.

Alcoholic Beverages	Tomatoes / Tomato Juice	Vitamin C
Coffee & Tea (even decaf)	Apples	Vinegar
Carbonated Beverages	Pineapple & Mango	Artificial Sweeteners
Citrus & Apple Juice	Lemons & Limes	Pepper
Chocolate	Citrus Fruits	Nectarines & Peaches
Lemon Juice	Cranberry	Strawberries
Chili / Spicy Seasonings	Grapes, Peaches, Plums	Cantaloupes

In addition to the above, **an even wider range of foods and beverages have been suspected to worsen symptoms for some patients with bladder pain/Interstitial Cystitis (IC)**. In fact, up to 91% of patients with IC report that certain foods and beverages cause their symptoms to worsen; the most frequently reported and most bothersome are caffeinated, carbonated and alcoholic beverages, citrus fruits and juices, artificial sweeteners and spicy foods. If you have IC, along with the items already listed above, you should also consider the following:

MSG	Cheese	Yogurt
Bananas, Cherries	Prunes	Corned Beef
Lima Beans	Fava Beans	Pickled Herring
Pickles, Horseradish	Raisins	Sausage, Smoked Meats
Soy Sauce	Ketchup, Mustard	Sauerkraut
Mayonnaise	Vitamin B	Burritos, Chili
Sour Cream	Onions	Pizza

Drinking plenty of water may help to decrease acidity in the bladder and dilute the effects of these specific irritants, especially when dietary indiscretions lead directly to increased symptoms. In addition, in situations where bladder symptoms are dramatically increased due to something you've ingested, the following may help to reduce acidity and provide some relief:

- Prepare a baking soda 'cocktail', mixing 1 teaspoon of baking soda with 16-oz. of water. This could be repeated 2 or 3 times a day, but one must avoid using baking soda if you are pregnant, prone to salt retention, or if you have high blood pressure.
- Prelief® is an over the counter pill, intended to reduce acidity. This can be purchased and taken according to directions on the package.
- Tums® as you would normally take for an upset stomach, with plenty of water.