

Foods that Irritate Your Bladder

What to eat and what to avoid

This handout explains what foods and beverages can irritate your bladder. It also gives tips for replacing these with other foods.

What happens when the bladder is irritated?

When your bladder is irritated, you may need to urinate urgently or more often than usual.

Why is diet important?

Some foods and drinks can irritate your bladder. To lessen this irritation, you will need to reduce or avoid these foods. Your symptoms should start to ease about 10 days after you start eating less of these foods or not eating them at all.

Foods to Avoid

These foods are most likely to irritate your bladder:

- Alcohol (liquor, wine, wine coolers, and beer)
- Acidic fruits or juices such as cranberry, orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit, and pineapple
- Apple juice
- Carbonated drinks
- Spicy foods and chilies
- Chocolate
- Acidic drinks and drinks with caffeine: coffee, decaf coffee, and some teas
- Tomatoes and tomato products such as tomato sauce, salsa, and ketchup
- Foods that contain the artificial sweeteners aspartame or saccharine



Be sure to follow these tips about foods to avoid.

What to Use Instead

- Drink coffee with the acid removed, such as Kava or Rombauts.
- Drink herbal tea with low amounts of citrus. Or, drink weak tea. To make weak tea, dip the teabag 4 times instead of letting it steep in the hot water.
- Use carob instead of chocolate in recipes.
- Drink low-acidity fruit juices such as apricot, pear, or papaya juice.
- If you want to drink wine, choose late-harvest dessert wines. They have a lower acid content.
- Use Superose instead of NutraSweet or saccharine.
- For citrus flavor, use only the peel from oranges, lemons, or limes. Do not eat the white part of rind and do not drink the juice.
- Use Prelief or Coffee Tamer to reduce the acid in foods.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- Urology and Urogynecology Clinic: 206.598.4294, weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Women's Health Care Center: 206.598.5500, weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesdays 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask for the Urology doctor on call to be paged.