

## **Bladder Diet**

Some healthcare professionals believe that dietary changes may be able to alter urinary symptoms in patients with irritative voiding symptoms, urgency-frequency syndromes, urethral syndromes, and interstitial cystitis. It is quite logical that foods that decrease the pH and make the urine more acidic are likely to increase urinary urgency and frequency by irritating inflamed areas of the bladder and urethra or sensitizing stretch receptors. Foods which are high in arylalkylamines may also irritate the bladder. In addition, patients may have specific food allergies, which may also cause increased urinary symptoms. Removing these foods from a patient's diet may alter normal values of some metabolites and neurochemical transmitters in patients with these syndromes, but not in normal controls.

For patients interested in dietary alterations, we recommend that you try to avoid all of the following acidic foods whenever possible. These include:

<b>ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES</b>	<b>COFFEE</b>	<b>PEACHES</b>
<b>APPLE JUICE</b>	<b>CRANBERRIES</b>	<b>PEPPER</b>
<b>ASCORBIC ACID</b>	<b>GRAPES</b>	<b>PINEAPPLE</b>
<b>CANTALOUPE</b>	<b>LEMONS</b>	<b>STRAWBERRIES</b>
<b>CARBONATED BEVERAGES</b>	<b>LEMON JUICE</b>	<b>TEA</b>
<b>CHILI</b>	<b>LIME</b>	<b>TOMATOES</b>
<b>CITRUS FRUITS</b>	<b>NECTARINES</b>	<b>VINEGAR</b>
	<b>ORANGES</b>	

In addition, foods that are high in arylalkylamines (tyrosine, tyramine, tryptophan, aspartate, and phenylalanine) should potentially be avoided. These include:

<b>AVOCADOS</b>	<b>CRANBERRIES</b>	<b>PRUNES</b>
<b>BANANAS</b>	<b>FAVA BEANS</b>	<b>RAISINS</b>
<b>BEER</b>	<b>LIMA BEANS</b>	<b>RYE BREAD</b>
<b>BREWER'S YEAST</b>	<b>MARMITE</b>	<b>SACCHARIN</b>
<b>CANNED FIGS</b>	<b>MAYONNAISE</b>	<b>SOUR CREAM</b>
<b>CHAMPAGNE</b>	<b>NUTRASWEET</b>	<b>SOY SAUCE</b>
<b>CHEESE</b>	<b>NUTS</b>	<b>VITAMINS B &amp; C</b>
<b>CHICKEN LIVERS</b>	<b>ONIONS</b>	<b>WINES</b>
<b>CHOCOLATE</b>	<b>PICKLED HERRING</b>	<b>YOGURT</b>
<b>CORNED BEEF</b>	<b>PINEAPPLE</b>	

If any of your symptoms are improved by avoiding these foods and substances, you will begin to feel better within a few weeks. If you are feeling better, you may begin to challenge your system by adding some of these foods back and see if any of them specifically irritate you. Alternatively, you could just try to observe which of these foods do irritate your bladder to begin with. Perhaps the most significant bladder irritants are alcohol, caffeinated beverages, and carbonated beverages. Drinking plenty of water may help to increase your urinary pH and dilute out any of the effects of these specific irritants. This can also be used when dietary indiscretions lead directly to increased symptoms. In addition, in situations where bladder symptoms are dramatically increased, one might deliberately try to increase urinary pH by using bicarbonate "slush". A dilute

solution of bicarbonate of soda may be made by mixing 1 tsp.of baking soda with 16-oz. of water and drinking this followed immediately by 8-oz. of water 3 times an hour for the next 2 to 4 hours. This could be repeated 2 or 3 times a day, but one must be careful about using baking soda if you are prone to salt retention or if you have high blood pressure.

**ALTERNATIVE FOODS: Apricots, Papayas, Pears, and Watermelons** are low acid fruits which may be substituted for the fruits listed above. Coffee drinkers may substitute kava or other low acid instant drinks such as postum. Tea drinkers can substitute non-citrus herbal or sunbrewed teas that are better tolerated by patients with these bladder symptoms.

Some people find these dietary manipulations useful. They are quite difficult to follow and may be difficult to maintain over a long period of time, but should give people some degree of benefit. This is not meant as a sole treatment for your urinary problem and we will probably use this in conjunction with other therapies. However, there is no doubt that increasing urinary pH by avoiding some of these foods, drinking plain water, or increasing the urinary pH with bicarbonate of soda, will help to reduce urinary symptoms to some degree.