

The IC-Smart Diet

Many people with interstitial cystitis (IC) find that simple changes in their diet can help to control IC symptoms and avoid IC flare-ups. Typically, avoiding foods high in acid and potassium—as well as beverages containing caffeine and alcohol—is a good idea. This helpful guide can help you make “IC-Smart” meal choices. Keep it handy for easy reference when dining out or when preparing meals at home.

Fruits

Allowable:

Bananas, coconuts, dates, blueberries, melons (except cantaloupe), and pears



Avoid:

All other fruits and juices



Vegetables

Allowable:

Homegrown tomatoes and many vegetables (except those listed below)

Avoid: Store-bought tomatoes, onions, tofu, soybeans, lima beans, and fava beans



Milk/Dairy

Allowable: Milk, American cheese, cottage cheese, frozen yogurt, and white chocolate

Avoid: Yogurt, sour cream, soy milk/cheese, aged cheeses, and chocolate



Carbohydrates/Grains

Allowable: Pasta, rice, potatoes, and some breads (except those listed below)

Avoid:

Rye and sourdough breads



Meats/Fish

Allowable: Poultry, fish, and some meats (except those listed below)



Avoid: Aged, canned, cured, processed or smoked meats/fish; anchovies; caviar; chicken livers; corned beef; and meats that contain nitrates or nitrites



Nuts/Oils

Allowable:

Most oils, almonds, cashews, and pine nuts



Avoid:

Most other nuts



Beverages

Allowable:

Bottled or spring water; decaffeinated, acid-free coffee or tea; some herbal teas; flat soda



Avoid: Alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine; carbonated drinks, such as soda; coffee and tea; and fruit juices, especially citrus and cranberry



Seasonings

Allowable:

Garlic and some other seasonings (except those listed below)

Avoid: Mayonnaise, miso, soy sauce, salad dressing, vinegar, and spicy foods (especially Chinese, Mexican, Indian, and Thai foods)



Preservatives

Avoid:

Benzyl alcohol; citric acid; monosodium glutamate (MSG); aspartame (NutraSweet*); saccharin; and foods containing preservatives, artificial ingredients/colors

*NutraSweet is a registered trademark of NutraSweet Property Holdings, Inc.

Dining Out: The IC-Smart Way

Call ahead

Before making plans to eat at a restaurant, it's a good idea to call ahead and ask about the menu. This will enable you to enjoy your meal and feel good afterward, too!

When ordering your meal

- Ask questions
 - Ask your waiter what spices are used in particular dishes
 - If you are unsure of an ingredient, ask what it is
- Modify your selection
 - It's your meal—don't be afraid to specify how you would like it prepared
 - When ordering a salad, tell the waiter **no** tomatoes or onions
 - Substitute a plain baked potato for a spicy rice combination
 - Ask for salad dressings and other possible "trigger" items to be served "on the side"
- Be careful with ethnic foods
 - Many ethnic foods contain spices that you may be unfamiliar with
- Know your "IC-Smart" menu choices
 - Most restaurants offer plain (not marinated) steak and chicken
 - Some chain restaurant foods may contain preservatives when sold in the grocery store

