



Bladder Health UK

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Nutritional Assessment Service

Information and application form

The relationship between diet and IC/PBS can be confusing. On the one hand you are advised about the importance of a healthy diet, and to eat a variety of foods from different food groups. This is certainly good advice. On the other hand, some of these “healthy” foods can make your symptoms worse. So where do you start?

Unfortunately there are no hard and fast rules. Every person has different tolerances to foods. Whilst one person may be able to eat a small quantity of an “offending” food, in others, one mouthful may make symptoms worse. Some people may find that foods do not seem to influence their IC/PBS symptoms at all. It is not understood why there are such individual responses to diet; perhaps it is because IC/PBS sufferers have different causative factors for their symptoms, giving different experiences with food.

Trigger foods

Bladder Health UK’s Diet Booklet gives a more comprehensive list of foods that may provoke flare ups. In general they are foods high in acids or contain certain chemicals and amino acids that can irritate the bladder lining.

Possible irritants are:	O.K. to try
Aged cheeses, sour cream, chocolate, yoghurt	Milk, ricotta, cottage cheese
Most fruits and juices, including cranberry (Try diluting)	Melon (not Cantaloupe), pears
Rye and sourdough bread	Breads, rice, pasta
Coffee, tea, carbonated and alcoholic drinks	
Fava, black, and soy beans, onions, tomatoes	
Aged, canned, processed and smoked meats (nitrates in ham, sausages and bacon) and fish. Chicken livers, anchovies and caviar.	Poultry, other fish, meat
Most nuts	Almonds, cashews, pine nuts
Food additives and seasonings, artificial sweeteners. Especially spicy and ethnic foods containing monosodium glutamate. Vinegar, pickles and mayonnaise.	Garlic
It is also suggested that IC/PBS patients with vulvodynia avoid high oxalate foods: beetroot, spinach, green peppers and aubergine.	

Finding your trigger foods

If you are unsure as to which foods aggravate your symptoms, it is worth trying a two-week “Elimination diet” followed by food challenge. This involves removing the high-risk foods listed above, and in the Bladder Health UK Diet Booklet, for two weeks and keeping a daily log of your IC/PBS symptoms on a 1 to 5 scale. There will hopefully be an improvement. It is important to substitute other foods from the same group (e.g. cottage cheese for yoghurt), to keep a healthy balance. After two weeks reintroduce the food, by itself, and wait to see if there is a reaction. If not, add a further portion to your next meal and bring the food back into your diet. One food should be brought back every 3 days, to allow for a delayed reaction, and food types should be rotated (e.g. day 1 cheddar, day 4 tomatoes). If the food provokes symptoms, avoid the food, and rechallenge at a later date. You still need to record symptoms on a scale of 1 –5 to review progress, and to uncover any unsuspected food trigger. Remember that other factors such as stress can make symptoms worse.

This method requires discipline and planning, so make sure you have a food notebook and food alternatives at home before starting. You may find that you are able to tolerate cooked foods, but not raw, or that you have a sensitivity to some permitted foods (e.g. wheat, which can provoke other symptoms such as IBS). You need to be a good detective, and avoid foods whose ingredients you don’t know.

Once you start to avoid your individual trigger foods, you may need to consider extra vitamin and mineral supplementation. Make sure you use a good quality company (such as Solgar, Quest, Lamberts or Biocare) that produces hypoallergenic supplements.

Nutritional Telephone Helpline

A telephone helpline is available to Bladder Health UK members. It is an individual way of offering confidential help and support on the subjects of nutrition, diet, detection of trigger foods, plus advice on vitamin, mineral and herbal supplements. It is run by Serene Foster, and available at a cost of £20 per 20 minutes, to include the cost of the call. If you are interested, please complete this short Nutritional Assessment form and return it to Serene Foster with the fee. She will then make contact with you by telephone

Serene Foster has joined Bladder Health UK in the role of Nutritional Advisor and is a qualified and registered Herbal Practitioner and Immunologist who has covered nutritional therapy in her training. She has a strong interest in IC/PBS and diet.

Nutritional Assessment Helpline for Bladder Health UK Members

Please fill in and send to Serene Foster with £20 fee.

Name: _____ Age _____

Write down all the foods and drinks consumed over a typical 3 day period. It may be useful to carry this sheet with you during the working day.

Day One

Breakfast.....
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Lunch.....
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Dinner.....
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Snacks.....
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Day Two

Breakfast.....
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Lunch.....
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Dinner.....
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Snacks.....
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Day Three

Breakfast.....
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Lunch.....
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Dinner.....
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Snacks.....
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- i) What is your telephone number and the best time to ring?
- ii) How long have you suffered from IC/PBS.?.....

iii) Please list any other health problems;

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iv) Current medication, if any;

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v) What supplements, if any, do you take? (Please give make)

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vi) Main reason for help required.

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vii) Do you have any known food triggers or sensitivities?

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viii) Any other comments?

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**Please return this form with a fee of £20 for a 20 minute telephone consultation to
Serene Foster, Hydes Herbal Clinic, 68 London Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 0QD
Cheques payable to Serene Foster.**

**She will ring you as soon as possible after receiving this form. The cheque will only be cashed
after the consultation has taken place.**

Thank you.