

How Diet May Affect Your Bladder

Although there is no particular “diet” that can cure bladder dysfunction, there are certain dietary suggestions you can use to help control the problem. Many people with bladder control problems decrease their intake of liquids in the hopes that they will need to urinate less frequently or have less urinary leakage. While a decrease in liquid intake does result in a decrease in the volume of urine, the smaller amount of urine may be more highly concentrated. Highly concentrated, dark yellow urine is irritating to the bladder surface and may actually cause you to go to the bathroom more frequently. It also encourages the growth of bacteria which may lead to infections resulting in incontinence. You should not restrict fluids to control your bladder without the advice of your physician.

Some foods and beverages are thought to contribute to bladder leakage. Their effect on the bladder is not always understood; however, you may want to see if eliminating one or all of these items improves your bladder control. If you are unable to give them up completely, it is recommended that you use the following items in moderation:

Alcoholic beverages of all kind	Tea
Apples	Tomatoes, tomato based products
Artificial sweeteners	Vitamin B Complex
Caffeinated beverages, caffeine of any kind	Grapes
Cantaloupe	Vinegar
Carbonation, carbonated drinks of any kind	Guava
Chocolate	Peaches
Citrus and fruit juice	Pineapple
Cranberries	Plums
Decaf coffee	Strawberries

Below are some substitution suggestions that you may use that will not irritate your bladder:

- Low acid fruits: Apricots, papaya, pears, watermelon
- Coffee drinkers: KAVA (low acid instant), Postum, Pero
- Tea drinkers: Non-citrus herbal tea, Sun brewed tea
- Vitamin C substitute: Calcium carbonate co-buffered with calcium ascorbate

Although water is always the best beverage choice, grape and apple juice are thirst quenchers and are not as irritating to the bladder

Cigarette smoking is also irritating to the bladder surface and is associated with bladder cancer. In addition, the coughing associated with smoking may lead to increased stress incontinence episodes. Obesity can also contribute to incontinence. It is also important to watch the amount of caffeine in medications you may be taking such as some over-the-counter pain relievers, etc.