

INTERSTITIAL CYSTITIS INFORMATION CENTER
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HOW TO STOP THE "BURNING" WITH IC
(C 2002 by KBenton)

The question I get most often from IC patients is: "What can I do about the burning? It's so bad and it drives me crazy; it's often worse than the pain, frequency and urgency [or whatever]." In attempting to find answers to this question, I researched and talked with many individuals as to how they have successfully dealt with this problem, and the following is what I have learned. Some information has been gleaned from B.J. Czarapata, CURN, Health Products Distributors and Today's Herbal Health, 3rd Ed., by Louise Tenney, M.H.

HOWEVER, ALL ADVICE ABOUT ANY MEDICAL TREATMENT GIVEN HEREIN SHOULD BE DISCUSSED DIRECTLY WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OF CHOICE. THE ICIC DOES NOT ASSUME THE RISK OF ANY ACTION TAKEN BY ANY PERSON BASED UPON SAID ADVICE. THE SUGGESTIONS ARE NOT LISTED IN ANY SPECIAL ORDER OF USEFULNESS OR EFFICACY. AGAIN, THIS PAPER REPRESENTS OPINIONS ONLY. LISTEN TO YOUR INNER VOICE AND TRUST YOUR OWN INTUITION.

1) Check your diet; have you cut out all sugar and yeast? Did you know that usually in a healthfood store (frozen section), you can find nearly yeast-free bread? There's even one now called "Ezekiel 4:9" which is bread as made exactly in the Bible: no flour, sugar and it's nutty tasting especially toasted. Best of all, it is pure protein! So, it's not light and fluffy as you like your pastry goodies? What if going totally off yeast products leads you to do more natural cooking and preparing of foods for your better overall health, i.e., homemade veggie soup? And yeast could play a role in your burning. I wouldn't take a chance and stayed completely off yeast 1-1/2 years.

Have you kept a food diary to see if you get symptoms immediately upon eating/drinking something? Or if you get symptoms three or four days later? Many times, you will know immediately upon ingesting a food/drink; other times, it may take as long as 3-4 days for a reaction to set in. Try not to eat the same thing every day. Bladder irritation/inflammation can be caused by allergic reaction to food you eat. Aim for a more alkaline forming diet which will give you a urine pH of 6.5-7.5. Hank Liers, President of Health Product Distributors, developed a chart (available through the ICIC) which can be used as a guide to choosing foods which will provide an overall alkaline forming diet. If you haven't checked your diet, you haven't done all you can do, and diet changes are "free" in essence. Maybe that's why many persons don't want to bother--it can't be helpful if it's free, right? Wrong--please don't discount dietary effects unless you have really checked them out.

And if you follow any of the IC diets totally, you will undoubtedly become nutritionally deficient because there is so little you can supposedly eat. It makes more sense to me to start with your normal diet and do something about it than to start full force with an "IC Diet." Work your way gradually onto an IC diet, however, if it seems that is what your body needs. It is also not advisable to try and do an "IC Diet" and an anti-yeast diet at the same time. There will be little left for you to eat at all.

Have you cut out all carbonated beverages, caffeine (yes, that includes tea, coffee, and chocolate too), alcohol, aged cheeses, Nutrasweet, white sugar products and starches and spicy foods? Are you drinking enough water? A good amount is to take your weight, cut it in half, and that's the amount of water in ounces you should attempt to be drinking daily. You should not overhydrate nor dehydrate either way. At some point, you should replenish your

ravaged body with the best nutritional supplements designed especially to help your IC. Contact me for more info on our supplement programs; we now have two complete ones of discounted nutritional supplements Health Products which has two complete programs of discounted nutritional supplements for IC patients, plus many other products which can serve as adjuncts to help in your healing.

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- 2) The herb Cantharis 30C for Bladder Irritation, comes in 1/4 ounce size with 180 pellets. You dissolve 3-6 pellets under the tongue 3-4 times a day or as needed. Put out by Standard Homeopathics, Los Angeles, CA 90061; available in health stores under homeopathic remedies. Not expensive.
- 3) If you can't pee much, 10-30 drops of Uva Ursi tincture three times a day may help get rid of water retention. It makes a good combination with parsley tea and strengthens and tones the urinary tract.
- 4) Place 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda in a cup of water and drink slowly. This is not advisable to do if you have blood pressure or water retention problems because of the sodium in the baking soda.
- 5) Try Tums; take two and follow with 8 ounces of water.
- 6) Tea Tree Oil sitz baths are soothing, but try a small amount of the oil first to see if you are sensitive to it. Tea Tree Oil is a pleasant-smelling, totally natural oil which is reported to be a safe broad spectrum antiseptic and fungicide. It is distilled from Melaleuca alternifolia, a tree species which grows only on the north coast of New South Wales, Australia. It has a reputation for being nontoxic and nonirritating.
- 7) Pour several tablespoons of Epsom Salts and baking soda each in the bottom of your tub with 3-4 inches of water or enough to cover the perineal area. Then don't stir the water, but gently sit yourself down for 10 minutes and see if that doesn't quiet the burning. This can be repeated as often as needed.
- 8) Aloe Vera Gelee - apply topically - also soothing. From the aloe vera plant known for years as an aid for burning. Also good for bruising common to IC patients. Some find drinking Aloe Vera Juice Concentrate daily diminishes their symptoms. You can try it plain (best of course) at just a couple of tablespoons a day.
- (9) Use ice gel packs 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off in the area of discomfort which means usually between your legs or on the lower abdominal area. Ice massage (you won't enjoy this) on your lower back or lower abdominal area can be helpful, and you can learn how to do that easily. You take a paper/plastic cup (small), put water in it and freeze; when ready to use, start peeling down the sides of the cup. You can use paper towels or a regular towel to catch the dripping water from the ice. When the ice is all melted, you should feel better and you just throw away the remnants of the paper cup.

10) Nux Vomica sublingual tablets (3-6 pellets under the tongue 3-4 times a day) may be helpful for nausea and indigestive pain after eating something your bladder dislikes. Like Cantharis, it is a homeopathic remedy and comes at the 30C strength and can be purchased at a similar price in health food stores.

11) Marshmallow and Slippery Elm. For severe pain and burning: soak 2 oz. of either herb, or one oz. each of both, in 1 quart cold water for 4-8 hours. Drink as needed for pain relief. Marshmallow Root is known for its tissue-repairing properties, especially all mucous membranes; it helps rid the body of poisonous and toxic substances that often collect or stick to these membranes. Slippery Elm helps calm inflamed or irritated tissues. It is also one of the best cleansers of the digestive system.

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12) Poly-dophilus, a Health Products Distributors' supplement and part of both IC Programs, can help restore your gut flora to normalcy regardless of whether you are taking antibiotics on a regular basis or not. IF on antibiotics, it should never be taken at the same time as the antibiotic; they will cancel each other's work. Take the P-D an hour before or an hour after the antibiotic. It will clear up constipation problems or help stop diarrhea depending on your need. Take 10-15 minutes before meals, or, as some do, take 4-5 capsules in the morning and then forget about it. Work gradually, however, up to the 4 or 5--not right at the beginning. Poly-dophilus needs to be kept refrigerated after opening to assure its potency remains high.

13) Pyc-C, another Health Products Distributors' supplement also a part of IC Program I (although there are many others out there called pycnogenols), is the most powerful natural free radical scavenger and antioxidant discovered (TOTAL HEALTH APR 94). Pycnogenols' plant-derived substance fights inflammation, infection, reduces muscle cramping, decreases allergies, enhances immune resistance and cell vitality, improves cellular nutrition, reduces spasms and functions as a unique Vitamin C and bioflavonoid "helper." Non-toxic and non-habit forming. This supplement is contained in a preservative-free gelatin capsule and is designed to be hypoallergenic and suitable for hypersensitive individuals. Dosage: 3 capsules daily with food. Initially, it may be useful to take 6 capsules daily spread out over the day for a period of several weeks .

14) Golden Seal Root is considered one of the best medicinal herbs in the plant kingdom and works as an overall body tonic. It is useful for healing mucous areas of the nose, bronchial tubes, throat, intestines, stomach and bladder. Golden Seal Root ranks high as one of the best general medicinal aids in the herbal kingdom. Its action goes directly into the bloodstream and has a natural antibiotic ability. (Not to be used by pregnant women however.)

15) Chamomile is an excellent tea for nerves and menstrual cramps. It is a soothing sedative with no harmful effects and is one of the best remedies for an upset stomach and/or inflammation. Green tea is also excellent; make sure it is decaffeinated.

16) Cramp Bark is one of the best female regulators in nature and is recognized as a uterine sedative and anti-spasmodic and helpful for urinary problems.

17) Garlic is nature's antibiotic and is recommended for all with urinary problems Garlic

stimulates the lymphatic system to throw off waste materials and contains antibiotics that are effective against bacteria which may be resistant to other antibiotics. Garlic, however, does not destroy the body's normal flora, a concern of many IC patients. It will also help fight against yeast. I have tried many garlic preparations and HPD's Garlic One-a-Day is superb. No odor and you can take more than one/day if you choose to do so without concern.

18) Citrus Seed Extract is now known as Pro Seed under Health Products Distributors. Its alkalinity helps to decrease the acidity of uric acid and to eliminate it from the system and may thus decrease burning. Each vegicap contains 125mgs standardized extract of grapefruit in a rice flour base. Suggested use is 1 vegicap 1-3 times daily before meals.

19) Zinc affects the acid-alkaline balance of the urinary system and should be in your IC arsenal. It is the key component for thousands of enzymes; for reproduction functions; for wound and burn healing; for antioxidant protection; and for normal taste acuity. Health Products Distributors' product, called

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Double Zinc Plus (12.5mg) and a part of IC Program I, contains elemental zinc each from picolinate and citrate, along with 3mg of coenzyme active Vitamin B-6. Take one daily with food.

20) N-A-C (N-Acetyl-Cysteine) is a precursor of glutathione in the body and a free form amino acid, recommended to help with mucousal linings in the body. May thus also help burning. HPD has 500mg N-A-C capsules/100 bottle. Suggested use would be to begin slowly with 1/2 cap/day and work up to 1-2 caps daily. I took this product the entire time I was working to heal my bladder. Vitamin A and/or HPD's Mixed Carotenes may also help (your choice of one of these is also included in both IC Programs).

21) Azo-Standard and both Prodiem and Uristat(same as Pyridium only 5mg less), bought OTC, are advertised to give "fast relief" of urinary pain and burning, etc. And of course Prelief if you just have to eat foods you know won't be good for your IC.

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