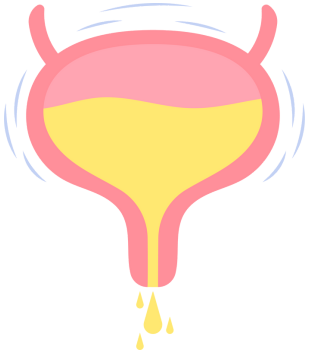
Bladder & Bowel Irritants

The following can irritate your bladder and trigger urinary urgency, frequency, and urgency urinary incontinence. Most patients are not sensitive to ALL of these irritants. Please minimize and/or avoid irritants that trigger YOUR symptoms.



Worst Offenders

- **CAFFEINE- coffee, tea**
- **ALCOHOL**
- **SMOKING (NICOTINE)**
- **ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS**

Fruits

- Citrus fruit: orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit
- Apple, applesauce
- Pineapple
- Cantaloupe
- Peach
- Plum
- Grape
- Guava
- Strawberries
- Cherries
- Bananas
- Berries, cranberries
- Prunes
- Raisins
- Canned figs
- Apricots

Beverages

- Carbonated beverages: pop, soda water
- Most juices (including ingredients from fruits and vegetables list)
- Chocolate drinks (ex. Hot chocolate)

Foods

- Chocolate
- Spices and spicy foods: chili peppers, curry (hot), cayenne
- Milk/dairy (lactose): yogurt, sour cream, cheese, cottage cheese, ice cream, mayonnaise, buttermilk
- Vegetables: tomatoes, peppers, onions, red cabbage
- Rye bread, sourdough bread
- Fava beans, lima beans
- Nuts: walnuts, peanuts, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios
- Preservatives, fermented foods, pickled foods, olives, sauerkraut
- Aged/canned/processed/smoked meats and fish, deli meats with spices/salt/seasoning, corned beef
- Vinegar
- Chicken liver
- Soy sauce, miso, monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- Ketchup, mustard, barbecue sauce, relish, steak sauce, sweet and sour sauce, Worcestersiresauce, tabasco sauce, tartar sauce
- Caesar dressing, Italian dressing, ranch dressing, vinaigrettes
- Salsa, pesto sauce, pizza sauce
- Molasses

Other

- Sugar, honey, fructose, sucrose
- Vitamin B complex, Vitamin C

References:

Bladder irritants. The Johns Hopkins Women's Center for Women's Health. (n.d.). Retrieved August 10, 2022, from https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns_hopkins_bayview/_docs/medical_services/gynecology_obstetrics/bladder_irritants.pdf

Bradley, C., Kenne, K., & Kowalski, J. (2020). Bladder irritants. University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics . Retrieved August 10, 2022, from https://uihc.org/health-topics/bladder-irritants

Brigham Urogynecology Group. (2015, September 28). Dietary bladder irritants to the bladder - brigham and Women's Hospital. Dietary Bladder Irritants to the Bladder. Retrieved August 10, 2022, from https://www.brighamandwomens.org/assets/BWH/obgyn/pdfs/bladder-irritants.pdf

Potential Bladder Irritants. Urology San Antonio. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://2ddfc340u6bj39m9dx128fas-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Bladder-Irritants-List.pdf