

Infections/Inflammation of the GU Tract: Interstitial Cystitis
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EFFECTS OF COMESTIBLES ON SYMPTOMS OF INTERSTITIAL CYSTITIS

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Introduction and Objective: Dietary changes seem to improve symptoms of individuals afflicted with painful bladder syndrome (PBS)/interstitial cystitis (IC). Since most of the data gathered on diet as it affects IC symptoms is anecdotal, we developed a validated questionnaire in order to determine if certain foods, beverages and/or dietary supplements are perceived as affecting symptoms of IC.

Methods: A questionnaire designed to detect whether food, beverages and/or supplements have an effect on bladder symptoms was developed, validated and administered to patients meeting NIDDK criteria for IC (n=37). In addition to answering general questions about the effect of comestibles on IC symptoms, subjects were asked to indicate whether each of over 150 individual items worsens symptoms, slightly worsens symptoms, has no effect, slightly improves symptoms, improves symptoms, or the item is not eaten by the subject; responses were recorded as -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, DE, respectively.

Results: Consumption of comestibles caused exacerbation of symptoms in 73% of IC patients; 5% indicated no exacerbation of symptoms and 22% didn't know. 18% of the subjects indicated that consumption of certain items reduced symptoms. Of those reporting exacerbation of symptoms, 75% reported exacerbation of symptoms after ingestion of coffee, cola, grapefruit and vinegar; 50-75% reported exacerbation of IC symptoms after ingestion of spicy foods, pizza, alcoholic beverages, strawberries, tomatoes. Subjects tended to avoid the most bothersome foods, indicating that they did not eat chili (50%), orange juice (41%), lemons (41%), spicy foods (41%), pineapple (36%), decaffeinated coffee (36%), grapefruit (32%), alcoholic beverages (32%), coffee (27%), oranges (27%), cola (27%), vinegar (27%). The rank order of specific comestibles which exacerbated symptoms is coffee, grapefruit, cola, vinegar, alcoholic beverages>tomatoes, tomato products>lemons, orange juice, chili> strawberries, pineapple, oranges, onions, pizza>chocolate>

decaffeinated coffee, apples; coffee was the most bothersome with a mean value of -1.85.

Conclusions: There is a large cohort of IC patients whose symptoms are exacerbated by ingestion of specific comestibles. The most frequently reported and the most bothersome comestibles include items containing caffeine, citrus fruits and juices, tomatoes and tomato products, items containing vinegar, and alcoholic beverages.

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