

Dietary Tips for Sensitive Bladders

Triggers for incontinence can often be found in a person's diet. Understanding and monitoring the foods in one's diet that can cause bladder irritation will help towards optimal bladder health and better incontinence management.

FOODS THAT MAY IRRITATE THE BLADDER

For those who experience incontinence or urinary tract infections (UTIs), the following foods and beverages should be reduced, as they may irritate the bladder:

- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Spicy foods
- Chocolate
- Citrus fruits
- Carbonated beverages
- Artificial sweeteners

FOODS THAT PROMOTE BLADDER HEALTH

The following foods have been shown to promote bladder health and should be incorporated into the diet of a person with incontinence or frequent UTIs:

- Cranberries and cranberry juice: The acidic nature of cranberry juice has been known to improve bladder function, and cranberry juice cocktail can prevent bacteria from sticking to the lining of the urinary tract.
- Purple and blue fruits and vegetables: Blueberries, plums, figs, eggplants and purple cabbage contain compounds that reduce inflammation and improve urinary tract health.
- Yogurt and sauerkraut: The probiotic bacteria found in yogurt and sauerkraut helps promote the growth of beneficial bacteria, inhibiting overgrowth or infection by pathogens.
- Coriander: These seeds of the cilantro plant have a cooling effect that alleviates irritation from urinary tract infections.



HELPFUL DIURETIC FOODS

It is important to remember that going to the bathroom and regularly flushing the kidneys and bladder is vital to urinary tract health. Unlike the foods previously listed that can irritate the bladder and trigger incontinence, these diuretic foods promote the production of urine, helping eliminate toxins that might lead to infection:

- Celery
- Eggplant
- Watermelon
- Leeks
- Asparagus

MAINTAIN FLUID INTAKE

A common misconception among people with incontinence is that drinking less water will prevent accidents. In reality, limiting fluid intake causes:

- The lining of the urethra and bladder to become irritated, which may actually increase leakage.
- More concentrated urine, which has a stronger odor. Drinking plenty of fluids can actually help reduce odor by diluting the urine.

People with incontinence, however, should stop drinking beverages 2 - 4 hours before going to bed, particularly those who experience leakage or accidents during the night.

Continuum can assist seniors with sensitive bladders through meal preparation, dietary education and helpful reminders. Our caregivers are also trained to recognize and report the early signs of a urinary tract infection that might otherwise go unnoticed or overlooked. Call **Continuum** at **(314) 863-9912** or **(636) 861-3336** or visit **ContinuumCare.com** today to learn more about how seniors with UTIs and/or incontinence can benefit from in-home care.

Sources: Caregiver Partnership, AgingCare, Livestrong, San Francisco Chronicle, New York Times

