

Patient Information about Interstitial Cystitis

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-interstitial-cystitis/index.shtml>

Interstitial cystitis (IC) is a chronic, inflammatory bladder condition that causes pain, urinary urgency, and frequent urination. In people who have IC, the lining of the bladder becomes irritated by toxins that are found in urine. Doctors do not know exactly what causes interstitial cystitis; however, researchers have discovered connections between IC and other conditions, such as asthma, endometriosis, and lupus.

There is no cure for IC, but symptoms often can be managed through medication, biophysical techniques, surgery, and changes in diet. Complications of IC include anxiety, depression, and insomnia.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., urologist) about interstitial cystitis. **Print this page**, check off the questions you'd like answered, and take it with you to your next doctor's appointment. Information about IC can help you work with your doctor to develop an effective treatment plan to manage IC symptoms.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Interstitial Cystitis (IC)

- Why do you suspect that I have interstitial cystitis?
- Might my IC symptoms be related to another condition, such as overactive bladder, urinary incontinence, bladder infection, bladder stones, kidney disease, or pelvic floor dysfunction?
- How will these other conditions be ruled out and an IC diagnosis be made?
- What diagnostic tests do you recommend?
- What do these tests involve?
- How should I prepare for these diagnostic tests?
- Might I need to have cystoscopy with hydrodistention, potassium chloride (KCl) sensitivity test, or bladder biopsy? Can you explain these procedures to me?
- When can I expect my test and/or biopsy results? Should I call for the results or will someone contact me?
Date: **Telephone number to call:**
- Who will explain these test results to me?

- What are Hunner's ulcers?
- What is chemical cystitis?
- What are my treatment options?
- What type of treatment do you recommend?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of this treatment?
- Do you recommend dietary changes to help alleviate some of my IC symptoms? Why or why not? **Recommendations:**
- Might you recommend that I have cystoscopy with hydrodistention from time to time to help reduce my symptoms? Why or why not?
- Do you recommend local or systemic medication and/or chronic pain medication?
- How will these medications be administered?
- What side effects are associated with these IC medications?
- What should I do if my symptoms worsen or I experience severe side effects?
Telephone number to call:
- What are your thoughts on biophysical techniques, bladder retraining, and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) to treat IC?
- What do these treatments involve?
- Where can I find a physical therapist that specializes in pelvic floor rehabilitation?
- Do you recommend that I participate in an IC clinical trial? Why or why not?
- If so, where can I find a clinical trial that is appropriate for my situation?
- What is the current status of sacral nerve stimulation as a treatment for IC?
- Am I a candidate for bladder surgery?

- Do you recommend naturopathic treatment, such as dietary supplements, herbal medicines, homeopathy, or castor oil packs, for my interstitial cystitis?
- If so, what do these treatments involve?
- What is my prognosis? How likely are my symptoms to go into remission?
- What strategies can I use to plan trips or activities where a restroom may not be readily available?
- What can I do about some of the complications of interstitial cystitis, such as anxiety, depression, and insomnia?
- How can I learn more about IC? Can you suggest any books or online resources?
- Are there support groups for people with IC in my local area?

Notes/Additional Information