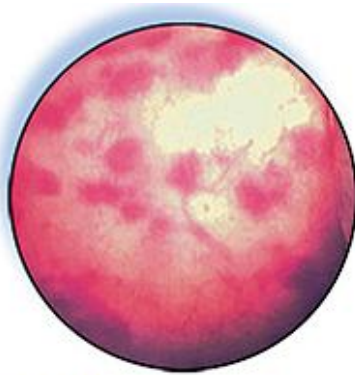


Interstitial Cystitis

Interstitial cystitis (IC), sometimes called bladder pain syndrome is a chronic bladder health issue. It is a feeling of pain and pressure in the bladder area. Symptoms range from mild to severe. For some patients the symptoms may come and go, and for others they do not go away.

IC signs and symptoms include:

- Pain in the pelvis or between the vagina and anus in women
- Chronic pelvic pain
- A persistent, urgent need to urinate
- Frequent urination, often of small amounts, throughout the day and night Pain or discomfort while the bladder fills and relief after urinating.
- Pain during sexual intercourse



Bladder inflamed due to Interstitial Cystitis



Normal Bladder

No single treatment works for all people with IC. Patients usually try different treatments (or combinations of treatments) until good symptom relief occurs. It is important to note that none of these IC treatments works right away. It usually takes weeks to months before symptoms improve.

Most treatments are aimed at symptom control.

- **Pelvic Floor Therapy:** Patients with IC often have tenderness and/or pain in the pelvic floor area. Muscle may be tight or in a spasm or a combination of both. Coordinated contraction and relaxation of these muscles through pelvic floor therapy helps control bladder and bowel function, pelvic pain, and pain with intercourse.
- **Electrical Stimulation:** Electrical impulses delivered to nerves can help to change how the nerves work. This technique reduces pain and decreases urinary frequency for some women with IC.
- **Limiting Stress:** Emotional and mental stress can worsen symptoms. Find coping methods to deal with family, work and/or past painful experiences.
- **Limiting Certain Foods and Drinks:** Most (but not all) people with IC find that certain foods, like caffeine and alcohol, make their symptoms worse.

Empowering Women. Restoring Hope.