

---

# INTERSTITIAL CYSTITIS

---

## definition

Pain or pressure perceived to be related to the urinary bladder, associated with lower urinary tract symptoms of more than six weeks duration, in the absence of infection or other identifiable causes.

## symptoms

The hallmarks of interstitial cystitis are pelvic pain, often centered just below the belly button or inner thighs, and urinary urgency/frequency. Other common symptoms include pain with intercourse, increased number of bathroom trips at night, low back pain, and constipation.

## diagnosis

The condition is a diagnosis of exclusion; it's made when symptoms are present and no infection or other identifiable cause is known. No test can confirm an IC diagnosis.

## PT

With IC, symptoms can be coming from the bladder, the pelvic floor, and other surrounding areas. They can also be exacerbated by the nervous system's response to the symptoms. Pelvic floor physical therapy can address these areas to greatly reduce symptoms and overall function.



*pelvic floor physical therapy is the most proven treatment for IC.*

The American Urological Association (AUA) wrote guidelines on the treatment of interstitial cystitis. Pelvic floor physical therapy is the only treatment proven to benefit a majority of patients and the only treatment given an "A" evidence grade!

In clinical trials, physical therapy has been shown to benefit nearly 85% of patients.

---

## multi-disciplinary approach

---

PATIENTS ALWAYS BENEFIT FROM A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN ADDITION TO PHYSICAL THERAPY. THIS CAN INCLUDE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

---

Lowering stress levels with gentle exercise, meditation, yoga, deep breathing, or working with a psychologist can reverse nervous system upregulation.

### STRESS RELIEF

There is no formal 'IC Diet', though some patients notice certain foods and drinks trigger symptoms. An anti-inflammatory diet can reduce chronic pain, and we encourage patients to 1) eat healthy and 2) avoid triggers.

### DIET & NUTRITION

Acupuncture has been shown to reduce pelvic pain symptoms for some patients, and many patients report benefits with supplements.

### ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

Bladder instillations, where a numbing solution is put directly into the bladder, and nerve stimulation may alleviate some symptoms of IC.

### BLADDER TREATMENTS

Anti-histamines, anti-depressants, and over-the counter or prescription pain medications are often prescribed to reduce pain.

### ORAL MEDICATIONS

---

## additional resources

The IC Solution by Dr. Nicole Cozean ([www.pelvicSanity.com/the-ic-solution](http://www.pelvicSanity.com/the-ic-solution))

Finding Pelvic Sanity Online Support Group ([www.Facebook.com/groups/FindingPelvicSanity](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/FindingPelvicSanity))

The Interstitial Cystitis Association ([www.ic-help.org](http://www.ic-help.org)) and the IC Network ([www.ic-network.com](http://www.ic-network.com))

---