



Yeast Infection (Candida)

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What is it?

- Yeast: naturally-occurring fungus always present in woman's vagina
- Infections can occur when yeast cells increase to higher than normal levels
- Very common in women; about 75% of all adult women will develop at least one in lifetime.
- Infection not considered sexually transmitted, as women who have never had sex can also get infected

Signs and Symptoms

You may experience some of the following symptoms:

- Vaginal itching, swelling and/or redness
- A burning feeling when you urinate
- A thick white discharge from the vagina
- Because these symptoms may also be a warning sign of other types of vaginal infections, it is important to contact your doctor who will make the proper diagnosis.

Spread

Some things that could potentially cause a yeast infection include:

- Stress
- Tight pants
- Wearing underwear that is not made of cotton
- Diabetes
- Antibiotics and/or steroidal medications
- Hormone level changes

It is very rare for females to pass on a yeast infection to their partner. In the rare case that the infection is passed on, the male may experience genital itching and may notice a rash developing on his penis.

If a male develops signs of an infection, his symptoms can be treated with the same cream that is used for vaginal yeast infections.

Hormone Level Changes:

In some women, hormonal changes are due to taking birth control pills. If you think that taking birth control pills is causing your yeast infection, **DO NOT STOP TAKING THE BIRTH CONTROL**, as this will not cure your infection. You should contact your doctor so that you can be properly diagnosed and treated.

Diagnosis

A doctor can diagnose a yeast infection usually by taking a look at the vaginal discharge. A sample of the vaginal discharge may also be collected using a swab and sent off for testing. If tests show that you have a yeast infection, your doctor will contact you and let you know of available treatments.

Complications

It is important to see your doctor to rule out other potential sources of infection such as trichomonas or bacterial vaginosis.

Treatment and Prevention

First Occurrence:

If this is your first time experiencing the symptoms listed above, you should contact your doctor. (S)he will be able to diagnose you and, if need be, prescribe an appropriate treatment.

Subsequent Occurrences:

If you have had a yeast infection before, you can treat the yeast infection by purchasing over-the-counter creams at any pharmacy. It is important to follow the directions on the package to make sure the treatment is effective. If you have any questions regarding the treatment, talk to your pharmacist.

Even with treatment, reinfection remains possible. Having a yeast infection once does not prevent you from getting it again.

You can have sex with a yeast infection, but it depends on your comfort level. Some women with yeast infections may experience pain during intercourse, while others will not.

IMPORTANT: Medications for yeast infections can break the condom, which can increase your chances of getting pregnant or contracting a sexually transmitted infection.

Medical Follow-up

If symptoms disappear, there is no need to see your doctor. However, if your symptoms get worse or treatment is not working, it may be a good idea to seek help from your doctor to rule out any other potential problems.

Additional Information

- Pain and/or burning during sex
- Moisture is yeast's best friend! Wear cotton underwear and pants that are not too tight. Nylon, pantyhose and tight pants hold moisture, which provides an

ideal breeding ground for yeast to multiply

- Use plain water and mild soap to keep the vaginal area clean
- Bubble baths, oils and body hygiene sprays spell trouble. Avoid using these products
- Rinsing out the vagina (douching) can cause irritation to the lining, increasing your chances of developing yeast infections
- Flavoured condoms cannot cause yeast infections!
- Get tested! You can have more than one infection at a time, so it is important to get tested

****If you have any type of infection in the genital area, it is important to inform your partner so that they can also be properly examined and treated if need be****

This information is for general knowledge only and does not replace professional medical advice.