



So what is a Yeast infection? - April 2010

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Have you ever had a yeast infection or do you have one now? Have you experienced first hand how awful a stubborn yeast infection can be! Trying to get control of this irritating infection can be a frustrating — if not impossible task — and left untreated, can lead to a much more serious health problem. Common in Women most often get yeast infections, then the very young and the elderly. Even men can suffer from a yeast infection!

So what is a Yeast infection?

A yeast infection can result from an overgrowth of Candida Albicans.

Everybody has Candida, it is a harmless inhabitant of the intestine and in a healthy gut, the fungus is kept in check by friendly intestinal flora: - Bifidobacteria bifidum and Lactobacillus acidophilus which prevents the overgrowth of Candida albicans. But if certain conditions allow this normally benign yeast to change its form, then it can run riot and create a long list of unpleasant symptoms. Damage occurs only when the normal ecology (symbiosis) of the bowel is disturbed, thus allowing the yeast to proliferate. Candida eventually competes with the bowel's micro flora and placing an enormous strain on the body's defenses.

Thrush is the common name for the same yeast, but in this case it usually thrives in more visible areas such as the mouth, throat, groin or genitalia.

Thrush tends to be most people's first encounter with *Candida albicans* and often results from overuse of antibiotics, which have been over prescribed for cystitis.

Although unpleasant and uncomfortable at this 'surface level' the thrush and cystitis should be relatively easy to treat naturally with diet and immune boosting nutrients (supplements) without continually taking repeated prescriptions of antibiotics. However the constant repeated cycle of cystitis > antibiotics > thrush > cystitis > antibiotics is likely to weaken the immune system and drive the yeast 'underground', especially if there are other health issues.

Other things that can contribute to the growth of yeast infections are:

- Steroids hormones
- Immunosuppressant drugs
- Contraceptive Pill
- Excess alcohol
- Low Thyroid function
- Poor Liver function
- Poor diet/quality/inadequate nutrients
- Protracted negative stress
- HRT

What may happen over time?

In order to grow, *Candida* generally causes a craving for certain foods that feed it such as sugar, yeast and pasteurized cows milk products. In time a weakened immune system may relinquish control, giving *Candida* an opportunity to proliferate and transform into a harmful fungus — a condition called Candidiasis.

Candidiasis can severely harm one's overall health status, affecting the:

- Synthesis and absorption of Vitamins and Minerals.
- The acidity of the intestine is increased and digestive enzyme production is impaired,
- Mal-absorption of minerals and vitamins essential for health may occur.
- Weakening of the immune system.

In severe cases — for instance when candidiasis (the fungal form of *Candida*) is present — it can break down the mucosal lining between the bloodstream and the gastrointestinal tract.

This breakdown may facilitate passage of harmful toxins and allergens into the bloodstream. Once in the bloodstream these toxins are free to travel to all parts of your body, where they can produce a host of adverse symptoms and further weaken your immune system.

Sign and Symptoms of Candidiasis

- Bloating
- Cramps
- Cravings
- Cystitis
- Nasal itching
- Rectal itching
- Vaginal irritations
- Constipation and/or diarrhea
- Burning urination
- Irregular or no menstrual cycle
- Frequent headaches
- Chronic fatigue
- Dramatic mood swings
- Irritability
- Skin eruptions
- Chronic congestion
- Muscle pain (lower back & neck)
- Sore throat
- Mouth blisters
- Depression and anxiety
- Blurred vision
- Eye floaters
- Weight gain

How can we help to get rid of yeast overgrowth?

By changing our diet! Foods we can eat:

- **Fiber** - It is important to get your bowels working faster. The faster transit time you have, the less chance there is for the Candida fungus to survive.
- **Fresh Vegetables** - Buy as fresh and organic as possible. Vegetables that are allowed are the ones high in fiber, but low in carbohydrates. Asparagus, arugula, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, endive, garlic, lettuce, onions, radish, spinach, tomato, turnips, watercress and more.
- **Lean Meat & Fish** - This category contains foods such as chicken, duck, eggs, fish, lamb and turkey. Buy organic, anti-biotic free and naturally fed meat.
- **Nuts & Seeds** - Almonds, brazil nuts, hazelnuts, pecans, macadamia, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds and walnuts. Buy them raw to avoid any mold. ADD LINSEED TO DAILY DIET
- **Water** - You have to include a lot of water while you're on a simple, anti Candida diet. Only occasional tea and no coffee. Peppermint tea is a good alternative.
- **Whole Grains** - Grains without gluten should be included in a yeast infection diet. Amaranth, buckwheat, brown rice and quinoa are all good choices.
- **Milk-Rice** - Goats or sheep's milk (dilute sheep's milk 50:50 with water) and their products may be used.

EAT PLAIN BIO-YOGURT DIALY

Foods to avoid

These are the foods that Candida thrives on; when you stop eating them you stop feeding the yeast!

- Carton or bottled fruit juices
- Sugar, honey or artificial sweeteners
- Food additives, sweeteners, preservatives, i.e. no processed food.
- Cow's milk or cow's milk products including cheese and butter
- Over-ripe fruit, dried fruit, bananas, melon, or grapes - the natural sugar levels in these is too high. (After a few months all fruits may be eaten in moderation, such as 2 kiwis and an apple a day, or the equivalent in other fruit.
- All alcohol
- Margarine, heated oils / fats, hydrogenated fats as these compromise the immune system. If you want the occasional fried food use olive or coconut oil, use a very low heat and keep a lid on the pan.
- Burnt food, especially oils are immunosuppressive and toxic
- Wheat or wheat products including bread, cakes, biscuits, flour and so on (except for non-yeasted spelt wheat bread, non-yeasted dark rye bread, and rice cakes, 'Essene bread' (whole grains have been sprouted) is available from some health shops

Supplements

- Digestive Enzymes - Biocare
- Probiotics - Biocare
- Garlic capsules (or fresh Garlic)
- Oregano oil – Bioforce

Other useful Tips

- Cut your exposure to chemicals, buy natural products, and avoid pesticides
- Tests are available to check the ecology of your gut