

Hope & Healing

Vaginal Yeast Infection

A heart at peace gives life to the body — Proverbs 14:30

Introduction

The yeast that causes vaginitis is a fungus, an invisible plant, called *Candida Albicans*. It grows naturally and harmlessly in women's vaginas and in the intestines of both men and women.

This natural and peaceful state, however, can be provoked into an attack of burning, stinging, and itching and a yeasty odor and a cheesy discharge, by an upset in the balance of things. This happens when diabetes strikes and blood sugars run high or when an antibiotic is prescribed. Other factors that provoke yeast vaginitis include:

- Pregnancy
- Birth Control Pills
- Hormones for menopause
- Chemical douches
- Spermicides
- Small tears in the vaginal wall from tampons or from vigorous intercourse.

During examination your doctor will confirm the infection through examining the yeast rods under the microscope or by culturing the yeast from vaginal discharge.

Treating Yeast Infections

You might think that treatment of yeast vaginitis would be quick, sure, and not much trouble. Ideally a vaginal cream clears the infection promptly.

Unfortunately, here's the reason yeast infections are so much trouble, they tend to return again and again in some women. When this happens, a great deal of time, money, and effort must be spent to get the infection under

control.

Dr. Marjorie Crandall is a yeast specialist. Here are ways that she has found to help become trouble-free from yeast.

- **Sleep stripped down.** Yeast loves warmth, darkness, and dampness. So, don't give the fungus a foothold, sleep in the nude or at least without panties.
- **Avoid tight layers.** Wearing panties, under pantyhose, under jeans, keeps your body from getting enough air. Wear skirts when you can. Or when you get home, peel off the pantyhose and let air in.
- **Don't powder.** Yeast thrive on starch and most powders have a starch base. Powder in your panties encourages the growth of yeast.
- **Stop the itch.** Fungus medicines do away with the infection but they may not immediately control the itch. Use Cortaid or Benadryl cream by dabbing it around the vaginal opening outside.
- **Lubricate naturally.** For intercourse, you can use mineral oil, petroleum jelly (except when using a condom), egg white and plain yogurt.
- **Avoid:** spermicides (except those in the tip of a condom), douches, baby oil, contraception jelly, foams, and sprays, and yeast-killing tablets and scented feminine deodorants and colored toilet paper.
- **Draw a soothing bath.** Fill a shallow tub with warm water. Then add ½ cup of salt to make the bath

about like the body's natural state. Sit in the water, knees apart, until the water cools off. Let the bath do the cleaning. The next day, repeat the bath, but use ½ cup vinegar instead of salt. This increases the vaginal acidity, which the yeast doesn't like.

- **Cotton is queen.** Nylon panties feel good but retain heat and moisture, helping yeast to grow. Use cotton panties or nylon panties or pantyhose with cotton crotch liners to keep skin dry and allow air to pass.
- **Germ control.** Yeast lives naturally in the bowel and spreads naturally from the bowel to the vagina when wiping after a bowel movement. So, wipe from front to back. And, before intercourse, you and your partner should wash your hands and sex areas. If there is an active yeast infection, avoid intercourse until it is cleared up. Infected or not, always urinate after intercourse to clear the bladder of germs.
- **About douches.** The vagina cleans itself. If you feel the need to douche, do so infrequently and use only cool water with or without 4 teaspoons of vinegar to a pint of water.

- **Yeast and diabetes.** Yeast loves sugar. Persons with diabetes have more yeast vaginitis because the yeast feeds on the sugar in the blood. Close control of diabetes through medicines, diet, and blood sugar monitoring gives lower blood sugars and fewer yeast infections.

Improving Your Resistance to Yeast Infection _____

Yeast infections are better controlled and more easily cured when our bodies are up to par and our immune systems are at full force. You can help things through:

- Regular exercise.
- A good night's sleep.
- Controlling weight.
- Little or no alcohol.
- No smoking or drug use.
- Caffeine in moderation.
- Eating lots of fruits and vegetables, including yogurt which has been shown to help control the yeast in the intestine.

Using Natural Fiber During Periods

Note: Superabsorbent pads and tampons left in place for more than 12 hours stop natural drainage and encourage germs to grow. Instead, use pads at night and tampons during the day.

Playing Doctor _____

All that itches is not yeast. Other causes of vaginitis include such things as forgotten tampons, life-threatening pelvic inflammatory diseases, gardenerella vaginitis (a germ infection), trichomonas (a parasite), chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis. Yeast vaginitis is differentiated from the other causes of vaginitis by the

appearance of the vaginal walls as seen during examination and by the finding of the yeast in vaginal discharge that is examined under the microscope or sent to the lab for culture.

Treating Your Clothes _____

Yeast remains in panties during normal washing, causing reinfection when the panties are worn again. The solution? Get rid of the yeast that survives washing by:

- Scrubbing the crotch of your panties with unscented detergent before washing.
- Killing with heat. Touch up the panties with a hot iron before wearing. Or, you can soak panties in bleach for 24 hours, then wash.

Summary _____

Chronic yeast infections can make life miserable. Help is possible. Become infection-free by using prescribed treatments from your doctor and add these proven remedies at home.

Awaken the Miracles Within You

The Miracle of the Four Prescriptions

A depressed man at the end of his rope poured out his story to his doctor. The doctor asked, "When you were a child what did you enjoy?" "The seashore," the man answered. "Do this," the doctor said. "Take these four prescriptions to the coast, alone, without books, without distractions. Open the first at 9 a.m., the second at noon, the third at 3 and the final one at 6."

The next day, seated on the sand, he read the first prescription. It said, "Listen." For three hours he listened to the roar of the waves and the cries of the gulls.

At noon he read "Reach Back." For three hours he reflected on the happy, good, sad, successful, and difficult events of his life.

At three he tore into number three. "Re-examine your motives," it read. For three hours he turned his reasons for living upside down and inside out, clarifying and restating his goals and visions.

At six he read, "Write your most serious worry in the sand." He wrote. As he gazed at his worry, the tide came in and erased it.

The recommendations and information in this handout are appropriate in most cases. However, for specific information concerning your personal medical condition, please, consult your doctor.