

Candida or Yeast Infection

What it is:

Yeast infections are most commonly caused by an overgrowth of the yeast organism, *Candida albicans*. *Candida* is actually a normal part of the flora found in the intestines and vagina. It becomes a troublesome vaginal infection when it begins to grow profusely, and creates an imbalance in the normal healthy vaginal flora.

How an infection is caused:

Use of hormonal contraceptives, steroids, antacids, anti-ulcer medications, antibiotics. Diets high in sugar or simple carbohydrates (white bread, processed cereals) or soy. Repetitive exposure to *Candida*. Use of products such as douches that destroy normal vaginal flora.

Vaginal yeast infection symptoms may include:

(most women experience only a few of these symptoms)

- White vaginal discharge, it is lumpy and sometimes looks like cottage cheese. The discharge should be odorless, though sometimes is "yeasty"
- Vaginal itching, numbness, burning, tingling
- Irritated skin that often becomes red or inflamed at the opening of the vagina.
- Painful urination
- Burning
- Pain or vaginal discomfort while having sex
- Rash on external area of the vagina
- Soreness or discomfort around the vaginal lips
- Tired or lethargic
- Poor memory
- Stomach pain
- Joint pain or swelling
- Muscle aching or weakness
- Heartburn, constipation, diarrhea, bloating, gas, or belching
- Endometriosis or infertility
- Menstrual irregularity or cramping
- Alkaline urine PH

How to treat a yeast infection:

Maintain a healthy diet that is high in protein, good fats, and complex carbohydrates. Avoid sugar, hydrogenated fats and simple carbohydrates.

Avoid triggers such as steroids, antacids, contraceptives, antibiotics.

Supplement your diet with probiotics.

If symptoms persist, contact your midwife.