

What is Candidiasis?

Candidiasis, also known as a "yeast infection" or VVC, is a common fungal infection that occurs when there is overgrowth of the fungus called *Candida*. *Candida* is always present in the body in small amounts. However, when an imbalance occurs, such as when the normal acidity of the vagina changes or when hormonal balance changes, *Candida* can multiply. When that happens, symptoms of candidiasis appear.

How Do People Get Candidiasis?

Nearly 75% of all adult women have had at least one genital "yeast infection" in their lifetime. On rare occasions, men may also experience genital candidiasis. VVC occurs more frequently and more severely in people with weakened immune systems. There are some other conditions that may put a woman at risk for genital candidiasis:

- Pregnancy
- Diabetes mellitus
- Use of broad-spectrum antibiotics
- Use of corticosteroid medications

What are the signs and symptoms of Candidiasis?

Women with VVC usually experience genital itching or burning, with or without a "cottage cheese-like" vaginal discharge. Males with genital candidiasis may experience an itchy rash on the penis. Most cases of *Candida* infection are caused by the person's own *Candida* organisms. *Candida* yeasts usually live in the mouth, gastrointestinal tract, and vagina without causing symptoms. Symptoms develop only when *Candida* becomes overgrown in these sites. Rarely, *Candida* can be passed from person to person, such as through sexual intercourse.

How is Candidiasis treated?

Several antifungal drugs are available to treat genital candidiasis/VVC. Antifungal vaginal suppositories or creams are commonly used. The duration of the treatment course of suppositories and creams ranges from single dose therapy to 7 days of therapy. Uncomplicated VVC may also be treated with single-dose, oral fluconazole. Oral fluconazole should be avoided in pregnancy. These drugs usually work to cure the infection (80%-90% success rate), but some people will have recurrent or resistant infections. Short-course treatments should be avoided in recurrent or resistant infection.

You have been given the medication checked below. It is important to use all medication as directed:

- Clotrimazole 1% cream. Use one (1) applicator at bedtime for seven (7) days. Screw the applicator onto the tube and squeeze tube until the medication fills the applicator. Remove applicator from the tube and insert deep into the vagina and push plunger. Remove applicator and rinse with soap and water. If you have external (outside) irritation, apply a small amount to the outside vaginal area as needed.
- Fluconazole (Diflucan) – one (1) pill. Swallow this with a glass of water.
- Gynazole-1 vaginal cream. Use one (1) applicatorful one time only. See package insert for specific instructions for using the vaginal applicator.
- Other vaginal preparation – please read the instructions on the package if you get a different medication from the pharmacy.

Recurrent Yeast Infections are defined as having four or more yeast infections in one year. There are treatment options for women with recurrent yeast infections. Please talk with your health care provider about which of these options may be appropriate for you:

- Fluconazole (Diflucan) 150 mg oral medication taken weekly for six months
- Topical antifungal cream used intermittently. Discuss the schedule with your provider.
- Boric acid 600 mg in Type 0 gelatin capsules intravaginally once daily for 2 weeks

Preventative treatment options may not be covered by insurance. You may need to pay for these medications at the pharmacy.

For more information

STD information and referrals to STD Clinics

CDC-INFO 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)

TTY: 1-888-232-6348 In English, en Español

CDC National Prevention Information Network (NPIN)

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Your health is important to us. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us. We are happy to help you.