

Yeast Infections

Is a yeast infection an STI?

A yeast infection is not considered a sexually transmitted infection. Three out of four women will have at least one yeast infection in their lifetime.

A yeast infection can be passed back and forth between two partners who are having unprotected sex. In this case, both partners should seek treatment.

Some symptoms of a yeast infection are similar to symptoms of other sexually transmitted infections (e.g. vaginal discharge and pain while urinating). If you aren't sure what you have, consult your doctor.

HCS wants to CU Healthy! The Health Promotion Team at HCS tries to achieve this through our:

- Resource Centre
- Student Peer Interns
- Health Promotion Advisory Committee
- Website (carleton.ca/health)
- Facebook page
- Newsletters, class presentations, workshops and more . . .

The Health Promotion Team promotes healthy lifestyles and wellness and can provide you with information about stress, colds, nutrition, sexuality, alcohol, etc. Contact the Resource Centre for more information at 613-520-2600 ext. 6544 or cu_healthy@carleton.ca.



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Vaginal Yeast Infections

A vaginal yeast infection is known medically as *vulvovaginal candidiasis* because it is caused by the naturally-occurring yeast *Candida albicans*. Yeast is normally found in the vagina in small amounts, but when it multiplies, a yeast infection may develop. Yeast infections can also occur in other areas in the body that are warm and moist such as in the mouth and beneath the fingernails.

Symptoms

Women may experience:

- Vaginal itching
- Burning while urinating
- Pain during intercourse
- Swollen or red vulva
- Thick, white discharge resembling cottage cheese

Men may experience:

- Painful swell in the tip of the penis
- Itching
- Red dots on the tip of the penis
- Burning during urination

If this is your first time experiencing these symptoms, see your doctor. Don't assume it's a yeast infection. It could be another medical condition.

Am I at risk?

There are several risk factors for getting a yeast infection, such as:

- Pregnancy
- Birth Control Pills
- Menstruation
- Recent or current use of antibiotics and some other prescription medication
- Unprotected sexual activity
- Mismanaged diabetes
- A weakened immune system
- Wearing damp clothing close the skin that doesn't breathe



Prevention

There are certain **precautions** you can take to decrease the likelihood of an infection. These include:

- Keeping your genital area clean and dry
- Avoid vaginal douching after sex
- After using the washroom, wipe front to back
- Avoid scented soaps and vaginal deodorants that can irritate the vagina
- Wear underwear made of cotton instead of synthetic products



How do I treat it?

Most yeast infections can now be treated with an over-the-counter anti-fungal cream.

Most medications are available in the form of an ointment or suppository that is inserted into the vagina.

Follow the instructions carefully. Make sure you use the medication for the full course of treatment, even after symptoms subside, or the infection may reappear.



Cyclic Infections

Some women experience cyclic yeast infections due to hormonal changes. In this case:

- Treat the infection each month
- Ask your doctor about the yeast infection pill (Fluconazole). It is taken monthly in the week before your period to prevent yeast infections
- A yeast-free diet may also be a treatment method for recurring infections

