

A fungal disease which affects many parts of the body, but is particularly likely to affect warm, damp areas.

What to look for

- Discharge
- itching and burning in the affected areas
- infection in the mouth causes small white patches on the gums, lips and inside the cheeks. These may be painful.
- diarrhoea or constipation, adverse reactions to certain foods, depression, anxiety, irritability, inability to concentrate, chronic fatigue, headaches and recurring cystitis. (more chronic candidiasis)

Causes

Candida is caused from the actual Candida bacteria which is an organism which is often on the skin or in the gut of most people. If the patient starts to get symptoms, it is because that another problem has caused the bacteria to flourish more than usual. (Except in vaginal thrush - it can be healthy and still be afflicted with thrush).

The elderly may get Candida in the mouth. This is usually caused by ill fitting dentures, cuts or abrasions.

Babies are prone to getting thrush in their mouth areas and this is quite normal.

Re-occurring thrush in women can be because of reinfection from a sexual partner or because of the continued use of contraceptive pill.

Traditional Treatment

In the case of vaginal infection, pessaries and creams are available and usually help to control the problem.

Mouth infections are usually treated orally. If systematic infection has been diagnosed, it is essential to us treatment which can get to the bloodstream.

Alternative/Natural Treatment

This condition is usually kept in check by other 'friendly' bacteria, but if a person is ill, run-down, or being treated with antibiotics, the fungus can grow. The virus does not live in acid environments therefore douse the area in vinegar solution. Tea tree oil can also be useful.

Dietary considerations

It is important to build up your immune system so it can fight off any overgrowth of the virus. Avoid sugar and refined carbohydrates and foods which contain yeast. Eat plenty of live yoghurt and try supplements of acidophilus. Vitamin E and Evening Primrose Oil are helpful as well. Garlic tablets are good as well.

When to seek further professional advice

Thrush can usually be controlled by topical creams and alterations to the diet.