

Natural Remedy For Yeast Infections

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Men & Women

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Introduction

If you have ever had to put up with the misery of having a yeast infection, you will undoubtedly know just how much of a 'bummer' it is!

It is very painful, can make you feel very sick indeed – it can actually be fatal, and you do not get any sicker than that – and it can come back time and again, no matter what you do or how hard you try to get rid of it.

Yeast infections are no respecters of race, age or gender, which is the reason why as you read this, there are many thousands of people all over the world suffering.

It really need not be that way if you know what is required to defeat yeast infections completely. However, the problem is that very few people have the information they need, and so they go on suffering when it is unnecessary to do so.

This book is going to change all that. It is going to give you an in-depth insight into what exactly yeast infections are, where they come from, and what you can do about getting rid of an infection so that it stays that way.

Some of the things you will read about in this book do not make pleasant reading, but everything is here for a reason. There are thousands of yeast infection sufferers who are looking for a cure for their yeast infection problems and you may well be amongst them.

If so, it is important to understand that, without knowing all of the (sometimes grim) details about your condition, it is almost certainly going to mean it is impossible for you to cure your problem for good.

You need to appreciate that you are probably looking for the solution to your problem in all of the wrong places, and if you continue to do that, you are not going to find the answer that you are seeking.

This book is going to change all that. It will tell you everything you could ever need to know – probably quite a bit more than you want to know – so that you can get rid of your yeast infection problem completely and totally.

No more pain, no more unpleasant 'discharges' and no more knowing that as soon as your infection has gone away, it is likely to come back again.

What are yeast infections?

The first thing to understand is that from the day you were born, you have been covered with yeast! In particular, ever since birth, you have been host to new particular strain of the Candida family of yeasts, *Candida albicans*.

Even though this particular yeast has been on your skin and inside your gut since you were born, it is the same thing that causes yeast infections, collectively known as [Candidiasis](#).

There must be something that happens to make this previously harmless yeast into one that causes so much pain and misery, so let's start by looking at what a yeast is so that we can begin to see where things go wrong.

But before that, what is yeast?

Yeast is a type of fungus, and while I don't imagine that most people would be too happy knowing that they are covered in fungus, there really is nothing to worry about most of the time.

Fungi are not the same as bacteria, in that they are a more plant-like organism that is often quite complex, especially in terms of their cell structure. Although fungus is a living organism similar to a plant, it does not have roots or leaves, with the natural home of fungus being in soil, water or on a decaying organism.

Fungi survive by secreting enzymes that break down the materials which are playing host to them so that they can absorb the nutrients generated by this process. This is a factor the importance of which you will begin to appreciate as you read through this report.

There are around 100,000 different types of fungus, of which approximately 100 are members of the Candida family. Of the 100, there are only a dozen or so that cause health problems in humans, with *Candida albicans* being the most common cause of complaints.

To be precise, 'yeast' is the description that is applied to the fungus when it is in a single cell form, and while it is in this form, it is generally harmless. However, once the yeast comes together to form a multi-cellular colony, it then becomes a 'mold' and it is when it is in this form that your infection breaks out.

What you have when you suffer a 'yeast infection' is, in fact, a mold infection. Since the common terminology is that it is a yeast infection, this is the phrase that we will continue to use even though it is not 100% accurate.

This is not pleasant, but...

When *Candida albicans* is in the single cell yeast form, it is essentially harmless. However, once the yeast is exposed to blood because of a break in your skin, it can grow and multiply, eventually becoming the multi-cellular colony that is typical of mold.

Once this happens, the mold develops tube-like 'branches' called hyphae which burrow into your skin between the skin cells. In order to find the necessary nutrients that it needs to survive, it is a natural part of the development of a fungus that it secretes enzymes in order to break down the surrounding materials to generate those nutrients.

This is exactly what happens when the hyphae are embedding themselves in your skin. Your body does not welcome being invaded in this way, and it therefore reacts by generating swelling, pain and heat as it tries to fight back.

You then have the yeast infection which is generally known as Candidiasis.

Section summary

- Yeast is a type of fungus, a plant like organism that is often surprisingly complex.
- In its single cell form, *Candida albicans* is essentially harmless.
- When it becomes a multi-cellular colony, however, it turns into a mold, which is when it is said to be a yeast infection.

Many different forms of Candidiasis

Generally speaking, in order for *Candida albicans* to proliferate so much that a mold is created and an infection caused, it needs to be in an area of the body where skin rubs on skin, where there is a higher than normal propensity for skin to be damaged, and in warm, moist conditions.

Even in these conditions, however, your body is usually protected by antibodies and helpful bacteria that keep the yeast under control.

If there is any damage to the skin that can allow the yeast to feed off the serum in your blood, you have conditions that are perfect for the development of a yeast infection.

The most common areas for a yeast infection to take a hold are in the area around the anus, the upper thigh and groin, in the arm pit area (especially when additional weight causes there to be skin folds), around the navel and in the skin folds below the breasts.

The infection itself can be identified by a red rash, often accompanied by swelling, and with clearly defined edges. The infected area is often itchy or perhaps painful, and there will sometimes be a clear, odorless discharge as well.

The infection can strike both adults and babies, so let us look at some of the more common types of infection in the next chapters.

Section summary

- For a yeast infection to occur, it is necessary for there to be warm, moist conditions, and a break in the skin through which the yeast can invade the body.
- There are many different types of yeast infections, but they almost always happen in parts of the body where these pre-requisites are satisfied.

Yeast Vaginitis

The problem

When people talk of a yeast infection, this is the specific type that they are commonly referring to, although as you are going to discover, it is not the only form of yeast infection.

Vaginitis is a yeast infection of the vaginal area and so it is a problem that is suffered by women. It is a very common infection, with some estimates putting the number of women who will suffer from a yeast infection of this type at some time in their lives as high as 75%!

The first sign that many women get that they have a yeast infection is itching or pain accompanied by an odorless, ricotta cheese-like discharge. Other symptoms that are seen are:

- Vaginal itching or burning.
- White, cheese like discharge that is sometimes lumpy (think cottage cheese) and sometimes not. However, this discharge can range from being a thick, grey-white discharge that smells like bread or beer to a thin liquid that is faintly yellow or even clear like water.
- Inflammation or swelling of the outer vaginal area possibly accompanied by the discharge, as well as a rash or sores.
- Vulva irritation.
- Painful and frequent urination.
- Discomfort during or after sexual intercourse.

However, it is important to appreciate that having any of these symptoms is not necessarily a surefire sign that you have a yeast infection. There are many other possibilities and it is crucial that you consult your medical care professional to get a proper diagnosis if you discover any of these symptoms.

What you must not do is diagnose yourself, decide that you have a yeast infection and then buy over the counter creams or lotions to get rid of it. Firstly, if your self diagnosis is wrong, which is very possible, the cream that you buy may not work, so that is money wasted.

Secondly and far more importantly, if every time you get a vaginal itch or burning sensation, you apply an over the counter solution to the problem area, then you are going to kill a high percentage of the normal harmless yeasts. The only ones that are likely to survive are those that become drug resistant.

Consequently, if at any time in the future you do get a vaginal yeast infection (and remember the estimate that 3 out of every 4 women across the world will get such an infection at some time in their lives), you will need to go to your medical attendant for something much stronger and potentially more harmful.

It is estimated that in the USA, for example, as many as 25-30% of vaginal yeast infection cases are now suffered by women who are already resistant to the passive over the counter treatments that can be obtained. This is bad news, especially for those women who have other health problems that make it difficult for them to take the stronger drugs that their medical attendant would otherwise recommend.

Finally, in most cases, a yeast infection will not cause the sufferer to miss their period.

Causes and solutions

Later in the book, you will read a chapter that describes many of the general causes of yeast infections throughout the body, but the solutions following are specifically related to preventing vaginitis.

Clothing: Wearing clothing that is too tight or close fitting creates almost perfect conditions for a vaginal yeast infection to develop.

Avoid wearing nylon pantyhose or nylon underwear as it is estimated that wearing man-made fibers next to the skin in this way can triple your chances of getting a yeast infection. Stick to unbleached cotton underwear if at all possible, because it allows the crotch to 'breathe'.

Change your underwear frequently – at least once a day is a minimum – and do not sleep wearing underwear. Underwear that is 'clogged' with dirt creates ideal conditions for the yeast to become a mold.

After washing your underwear, boil it for five minutes to make sure that all of the yeast cells that survive the washing process are killed, or press them with an iron that is set as hot as possible to achieve the same end result. I have even heard of people 'nuking' their undies in the microwave for a couple of minutes, but be careful if you do, as it might just completely destroy your favorite items!

If you have been swimming, avoid staying in your wet costume for any longer than necessary. The wet bottom half of the costume creates conditions where your skin cannot breathe, allowing yeast to flourish.

Chemicals: Avoid using strong, non-natural soaps, because there is a fair chance that the chemicals in these soaps are not good for you (especially in such a delicate area of the body). They also wash away the 'good' bacteria that help keep the yeast under control, so instead of

washing being a valuable aid to keeping yeast at bay, you are actually achieving the opposite if you use soap that contains chemicals in it.

The same is true of bubble bath or shower gel solutions, and douches that are not 100% made of natural ingredients should be avoided as well.

Beware of clothes that contain dyes and inks for the same reason. The chemicals in them may irritate the vaginal area, and heavily dyed clothing (especially underwear) may not 'breathe' well.

Even those scented, dyed toilet tissues that seem like such a great idea to make the bathroom a 'nicer' environment have been known to cause yeast infections. Plain, unbleached toilet tissue is a far better option than any of the fancy, more expensive 'boutique' varieties, as well as being cheaper.

Sexual practices: As you will read later, although it is far less common, men too can get yeast infections in the groin area and they can be unaware of the fact that they are infected because it can sometimes be completely asymptomatic.

For this reason, it is entirely possible for sexual partners of both genders to pass yeast infections backward and forwards. If you or your partner is infected, it is advisable to practice safe sex and to use a condom.

Beware condoms that are lubricated with anything that contains nonoxynol-9, spermicide that is believed to help kill the HIV virus. It has now been established that this chemical also [contributes to yeast infections in some women](#) so follow the advice and don't use anything containing nonoxynol-9 if you are in any doubt.

Hormones: At the various times in your life when your hormonal balance changes, you become far more susceptible to yeast infections.

For example, pregnant women are particularly prone to yeast infections, and at such an important time, you must absolutely ensure that the treatment you apply to the problem is safe for both you and your unborn baby.

The tendency to suffer yeast infections during pregnancy will significantly increase during the last three months of your interment because of changes in acidity and sugar levels that take place in the vaginal area in preparation for the impending birth.

Because contraceptive birth control pills contain either male or female hormones, it is common for women who are taking them to suffer regular yeast infections. Also, going through the menopause makes many women considerably more susceptible to recurring vaginitis.

Specific treatments for vaginitis

Garlic tampons: Peel a clove of garlic, but be careful that it does not get damaged, as it has been reported that garlic oil (which would be released in the damaged area) might sometimes burn. Wrap the garlic in a thin cloth and then insert into the vagina like a tampon, although you can use the garlic 'as is', without the cloth if you choose to.

Vinegar douche: Mix a tablespoon of vinegar and a similar amount of active yoghurt together with a few drops of garlic (or tea tree) oil and add all the ingredients to warm water. After that, use as a relieving and cleansing douche.

Section summary

- The most common type of yeast infection in adults is vaginitis, an infection suffered only by women, that affects the groin area.
- The main symptoms of vaginitis are pain or itching in the crotch, an unsightly rash and an unpleasant discharge of one form or another.
- There can be several causes of the condition, including clothing that is too tight or made of the wrong materials, irritation from chemicals, hormonal imbalances or factors related to sexual relationships.

Penis yeast infection

The problem

As highlighted in the previous chapter, it is possible for men to get a yeast infection in the same way as women, although it is far less common.

However, when men do get such an infection, it is not unusual for them to have none of the itching or pain that commonly identifies the same condition in women. An infected male might know nothing about the existence of the condition.

There is a slightly higher risk of uncircumcised men getting such an infection around the head (glans) of the penis, known as balanitis.

When there are identifiable symptoms present, these might be a slight white to yellow discharge from the end of the penis, possibly accompanied by slight inflammation and patchy white blemishes around the base of the glans.

There might also be some pain or discomfort after sexual intercourse.

Although it is not that likely in clean, healthy men, it is possible for the penis to become very swollen and painful, although this is not generally going to happen in men whose immune system is not damaged in some way.

Causes and solutions

As with vaginitis, a primary cause of an infection in men is wearing clothing that is too tight or underwear that is made of man made materials. Wearing wet clothes like a damp bathing costume for any length of time is also likely to exacerbate the problem.

As previously suggested, *Candida albicans* needs warm, damp conditions in which to thrive, so by keeping the groin area clean and dry, you can significantly reduce the chances of contracting an infection.

In order to assist in this task, you can use either antiperspirant or talcum powder, but if you choose to do the latter, make sure that the powder you are using is free of both potentially irritating chemicals and cornstarch.

Starch provides an ideal environment for *Candida albicans* to multiply, so it must be avoided. For this reason, baby powder is the perfect answer to staying dry.

As mentioned in the last chapter, genitalia based infections can be passed backwards and forwards between sexual partners, so practicing safe sex is a must.

Section summary

- Men too can suffer yeast infection in the groin area, although it is far less common in men than in women.
- In men, a yeast infection can be entirely asymptomatic, although, because the infection can be passed backwards and forwards between sexual partners, it is extremely important that any man who believes that he may have a yeast infection has the condition investigated as soon as possible.

Nail yeast infection

Candida albicans can attack the skin around the base and sides of the nails of the fingers and toes.

When this happens, the area around the nail will become red and swollen, with the possibility of there being pus or some other discharge from the infected areas.

If the infection then gets beneath the nail, the swelling will discolor the nail so that it turns yellow and then black, eventually coming away from the cuticle. When this happens, the nail that begins to grow to replace that which has been lost will be distended, misshapen and covered with ridges or grooves.

Those most at risk of contracting a nail yeast infection are people whose hands are constantly wet, such as those who work behind the bar or in the kitchens of a restaurant. Children who are constantly sucking their thumb are also at high risk of contracting such an infection.

Causes and solutions

The primary cause of nail yeast infections is having constantly damp hands or feet, and the easiest way of reducing the risk of infection is to keep your hands or feet as dry as possible at all times.

If your employment necessitates you having your hands immersed in water for long periods of time, you should protect them by wearing protective gloves if at all possible. However, wearing rubber or plastic gloves is likely to make your hands sweaty and damp and it is therefore important to remove them regularly to give your fingers an opportunity to 'breathe'.

Alternatively, if gloves are not convenient or available, use a protective cream like lanolin or barrier cream.

As with your hands, if your feet get too hot and sweaty, you are creating the ideal conditions for yeast to become mold, and for an infection to occur around the nail area as a result.

For this reason, you should avoid wearing tight fitting shoes or boots (especially those made of plastic or rubber), and wear socks made only of natural fibers like cotton or wool.

We all manage to get our feet wet from time to time, either by walking in the rain, or by treading in standing water. Whenever you do so, make sure that you remove the damp footwear and socks as soon as possible, because these provide an ideal environment for yeast to grow and multiply.

Section summary

- Nail yeast infection is common amongst those whose hands are in water a great deal of the time because of their job.
- Such an infection can affect both fingernails and toenails.

Mouth yeast infection (Thrush)

The problem

Oral infection with *Candida albicans* is known as thrush, and is prevalent in babies during the first few months of their lives.

It can also happen in adults, but it is most likely to attack those who already have some other factor that makes them more susceptible to the proliferation of yeast in the mouth and throat.

For example, anyone whose immune system has been weakened by a distinct and separate medical condition like HIV or leukemia would be far more likely to contract thrush than would a healthy, fit individual whose immune system was normal. A similar situation would apply to someone with diabetes, because their saliva contains more than the normal degree of sugar, making the mouth of a diabetic an ideal environment for yeast to thrive.

If you have thrush, you will often feel a pain in the area of your tongue, and also around the roof and sides of your mouth. You may notice white sores in your mouth around your tongue, on the roof of your mouth and on the inside of your lips.

However, the absence of such visible and noticeable sores does not mean that there is no oral *Candida albicans* infection, because sometimes the infection will be centered at the back of your throat, and it is possible that there will be no visible signs of infection.

You would, however, have a definite 'sore throat' and it is likely that you would need to visit your medical attendant to get it treated. Over the counter sore throat remedies are unlikely to make a significant difference.

When you do so, they would be readily able to identify your problem by viewing a scraping from the infected area that has been treated with potassium hydroxide under a microscope. *Candida albicans* cells are immediately identifiable in this situation.

Causes and solutions

Newborn babies are especially prone to oral yeast infections. Before they are born, babies have no exposure to bacteria or yeast, but this situation changes the second they are born.

From that point on, they are bombarded with both yeast and bacteria in exactly the same way as anyone else. It is common for there to be an overgrowth of yeast until the baby's body 'learns' to get the balance right.

The condition will generally go away of its own accord without any specific treatment. However, if mother is breast feeding the baby, then the presence of colostrum in babies' milk will help to protect them against the condition because it is a rich source of antibodies. This can be further assisted by the nursing mother eating several cloves of garlic every day, because garlic has antifungal qualities that naturally repel yeast.

In adults, the condition is less common because it depends to a large extent on conditions being more favorable than is normal for the yeast to proliferate. If you do contract thrush, try adding garlic to your diet, and also holding crushed garlic in your mouth for a few minutes several times a day.

Section summary

- An oral yeast infection or thrush is very common in newborn babies, although if the mother is breast-feeding, it is less likely.
- While thrush is occasionally seen in adults, it is less common, particularly in adults whose general health and wellness is A1, meaning that their immune system is in a good condition as well.

Diaper rash

The problem

Diaper rash is an extremely common form of yeast infection that is seen in babies, and in adults who are forced to wear diapers because of a medical problem such as incontinence.

When babies are born, they are completely sterile with no yeast or bacteria being present on or in their body. At birth, however, that situation changes immediately and within the first few hours of life, baby will acquire both yeast and bacteria, firstly on the skin, and very soon afterwards, in the gut. As soon as this happens, they become susceptible to yeast infections.

When a baby (or indeed an adult) experiences a nappy rash, the area of that rash will be extremely red, sometimes with white pimples or patches. The edges of the rash area will be clearly delineated, with the skin beyond the infected area being clear and unblemished.

The rash itself can cover the whole area that is normally enclosed by the nappy, so that the complete genital area as well as the anus, buttocks, upper legs, lower abdomen and back can be raw and red.

There will often be some pain or irritation associated with the infection, which is going to make your baby cry a great deal. For this reason, nappy rash is extremely unpleasant for both baby and parents alike.

Causes and solutions

The primary reason why anyone who is wearing a diaper is susceptible to yeast infection is the fact that, by their very nature, modern disposable diapers have an external skin that is nonporous.

Because it is designed to be as close-fitting as possible in order to prevent leakage, and because it does not allow the skin to 'breathe', wearing a diaper provides an ideal environment for *Candida albicans* to flourish.

The whole body area that is enclosed by the diaper is both warm and moist, and often either urine or feces (or sometimes both) will be present. In this situation, bacteria can rapidly break down these materials to create ammonia (the smell of which every parent will recognize) and other irritants that can damage the skin, particularly in very young babies whose skin is not particularly resistant.

You have the ideal conditions in which *Candida albicans* can rapidly transmute itself from a yeast into a mold, at which point infection occurs.

The solution to diaper rash is simple. It is a question of keeping baby as dry and as clean as possible.

If you can, change the diaper as soon as the baby has 'done' anything in it, and make sure that they are clean and dry before putting on a new one. Using powder to help keep baby dry is a good idea as long as the powder does not contain cornstarch, because starch is going to help the yeast to proliferate, rather than hindering it.

Nappy rash often occurs when your baby is suffering from diarrhea, because regular and frequent, watery bowel movements provide a perfect situation for yeast to thrive and multiply.

This is a time when it is particularly important to change the diaper as soon as practicable after the event, and you will probably also want to use a suitable barrier cream like lanolin or Vaseline as an additional protective layer for your baby's delicate and already irritated skin.

Especially if your baby already has a painful rash, it will be best if you can leave them without a diaper for some time, because keeping the infected area open to the elements allows the skin to breathe and encourages the rash to diminish in size and severity.

This does make it likely that there will be an 'accident' every now and then, but the quid pro quo is a much more comfortable baby, probably resulting in far less crying. On balance, most parents would accept this as the 'pay off' for an occasional cleanup job!

Section summary

- Diaper rash is a very common form of yeast infection that is seen in both babies, and in adults who are forced to wear diapers because of a condition such as incontinence.
- To minimize the risk of diaper rash, you should change the baby every time they have done something in their diaper, and if the baby can be left without a diaper every so often, that will certainly help reduce the risk of infection, or the severity of an existing condition.

Internal or systemic yeast infection

The problem

As well as being present on the skin, yeasts are present in the human gut where they are generally kept in check by healthy bacteria.

There may be times when the balance between bacteria and yeast within your body becomes skewed in favor of the yeast, in which case you can suffer from an internal yeast infection.

If an infection gets into your bloodstream, which is almost inevitable, it can spread throughout your body, in which case you have a very serious medical emergency on your hands. In fact, it is possible that as many as three in every four people who suffer a systemic (i.e. a full body) yeast infection will die.

The problem with such an infection is that there is no single symptom that clearly indicates that an individual is suffering from an internal or systemic yeast infection.

Any symptoms that are seen to be present can be erratic and unpredictable as well, making it even harder to pin down the exact cause of the problem. You might have a blinding headache today and no headache at all tomorrow, and stomach ache the day after but not the day after that.

The only way that an internal yeast infection can be diagnosed is by a biopsy performed by a qualified medical professional.

Candida albicans infections are thought to account for up to 80% of all systemic infections, and because of the extremely high mortality rate, if you have any reason whatsoever to suspect that you might have some kind of non-specific infection, you should seek urgent medical attention immediately.

Internal yeast infections are extremely common in hospitalized patients, with the rate of infection happening in hospital nowadays being some 450% higher than it was in the early 1980s!

Causes and solutions

It is clear that an internal yeast infection is a very serious condition indeed.

However, if you are a fit, healthy individual with a normal immune system, an internal yeast infection is unlikely to cause you any harm at all. Indeed, you may not even be aware that you have such an infection, and it will go away entirely of its own accord.

If on the other hand your immune system has been compromised by some previous medical condition or the treatment for such a condition, that represents a situation in which an internal yeast infection can be life-threatening.

For example, suffering from HIV, leukemia or cancer would make you far more susceptible to such an infection, as would the damage that will be done to your immune system by treatments such as chemotherapy, or a surgical operation like an organ transplant.

Section summary

- An internal or systemic yeast infection is likely to prove fatal in some 75% of cases where it has been correctly diagnosed.
- However, an internal yeast infection is unlikely to adversely affect anyone who does not have a weak immune system because of some of pre-existing medical condition or treatment that has reduced or removed their ability to fight against infection.

What causes yeast infections?

In all of the individual categories highlighted in the previous few chapters, there are specific causes and preventative measures that you can take to reduce the possibility of suffering a yeast infection as a result of *Candida albicans* gaining the upper hand over the 'good' bacteria that normally keep yeast in check.

In addition to these specifics, however, there are many general situations that make your body a better potential 'host' for a yeast infection.

In this chapter, we will consider these situations, so that you can begin to make the lifestyle changes necessary to reduce your susceptibility to yeast infections.

Dealing with stress

It has long been accepted by medical science that increased levels of stress adversely affect people in both a psychological and a physical manner. In particular, when you are under a great deal of stress, your body undergoes subtle chemical changes that make your immune system far less effective at fighting back against invading diseases and infections.

Stress also has a tendency to make your stomach far more acid than it is under normal relaxed circumstances, and this change of balance in this particular area of your body makes internal yeast infections more likely to occur.

When you are handling stressful situations badly, the level of chemical imbalance in your body is going to be heightened. Even when you are handling the situation well, stress can still reduce the effectiveness of your immune system, making you more susceptible to infection.

In an ideal world, we would all like to remove every source of stress from our lives. However, this is not how it works in reality, as we all have stressful situations that occur on an almost daily basis.

Doing what you can to minimize the amount of stress you have to put up with in your life will reduce your susceptibility to yeast infections as well as other unpleasant and unwelcome medical conditions.

Avoid antibiotics

In the everyday hurly-burly of our modern life, there is no doubt that medical professionals in most Western countries are under ever increasing pressure to perform medical miracles.

Because the pressures on medical systems throughout the world are also increasing at an ever-accelerating rate, most of our doctors and

medical attendants do not have the time or resources to give every individual patient the degree of care that they really need. Sad as it is to say, it is sometimes simpler to give a complaining patient some tablets and to tell them to go home and take them, than it is to try to get to the real root cause of the problem.

This is a common feature of most medical systems in the West. Unlike many systems of treatment that originated in Asia and the east, Western medicine does not as a general rule adopt a holistic 'whole body' approach to medical treatment.

In the West, it is far more common to view the human being as a machine made up of many individual 'components'. As a consequence, Western medical treatments tend to be administered on the basis that if one of the 'machine parts' is damaged, it should be repaired or replaced. In other words, if you have a headache, then that is the part of your body that need repairing, so you may well be prescribed painkillers.

The holistic approach adopted by a practice such as acupuncture, however, would view the situation entirely differently, being far more focused on tracing the root cause of the problem rather than simply treating the condition itself.

Because this is not what happens in Western countries, and because medical professionals have less time available for each individual patient that they have to treat, it has become increasingly common over the last 20 years or so for doctors to prescribe antibiotics for a huge and ever expanding range of medical conditions.

This is not always a bad thing. Indeed, in the vast majority of cases when an antibiotic is prescribed, it will do exactly what the medical attendant who prescribed that drug intended. For example, if the patient is suffering from some kind of infection, the prescribed antibiotic will almost always get rid of that infection.

In doing so, the antibiotic will have killed the bacteria that were causing that particular infection. However, as well as killing the 'bad' bacteria that were causing the infection, the antibiotic will also kill many other bacteria, including those that allow your body to resist yeast infections.

These are the bacteria that live in your gut and on your skin that will fight the yeast for whatever nutrients are available, and will generally win their fight when they do so. However, taking antibiotics will kill the bacteria as well as the ones that were causing the infection and that makes you far more susceptible to a yeast infection.

Some antibiotics will also attack the yeast cells that will eventually cause an infection if they are allowed to grow and multiply. However,

yeast is a fungus that it is often surprisingly complex, and one aspect of this is the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. While the antibiotic might kill a significant proportion of the yeast cells on your skin and in your gut, those that it does not kill will become increasingly resistant to antibiotics over time.

When you suffer a yeast infection, mild over the counter, or even prescribed, antibiotic creams and potions are no longer strong enough to defeat your infection.

Researchers now believe that the ready prescription of broad spectrum antibiotics as a 'magic bullet' remedy to an ever increasing panoply of medical complaints is one of the primary reasons why the incidence of yeast infections is also increasing.

Every time you take a broad spectrum antibiotic, you are increasing your chances of suffering a yeast infection. For that reason, you should avoid taking such medicines whenever possible.

The importance of diet

Your diet has a significant effect on increasing or decreasing your likelihood of suffering a yeast infection.

There is one thing that you can put into action right now that will significantly decrease your chances of contracting a yeast infection.

Cut down on the sugar that you consume, and you will cut down the chance of suffering a yeast infection at the same time.

Yeast loves sugar, whereas the good bacteria that help combat yeast and your immune system are not at all keen on the stuff! The more sugar you take in your diet, the more you are creating an environment ripe for yeast cells to proliferate.

You can understand how sugar in your diet can affect the yeast and bacteria in your gut, but it may not be quite as clear how sugar can contribute to yeast infections in other parts of the body. In that case, there are two significant factors that you need to consider.

Firstly, it may be a hackneyed old cliché, but you really are what you eat. Every cell of your body including those that make up your skin are nourished by the nutrients and other foodstuffs that you take in every day.

It follows that the more sugar you eat, the more of it there will be in the skin cells on top of which the *Candida albicans* is sitting. Because of this, all it needs is for the slightest skin abrasion to damage the skin cell wall, and the yeast becomes able to 'sense' the sugar on which it is happy to gorge itself.

Secondly, we have already established that in adults, the most common form of yeast infection is vaginitis. When you feed vast amounts of sugar into your body (and it is now estimated the average American eats more than three pounds of sugar every week, but in 1900, the average consumption of sugar was five pounds a year), your body will process as much of it as possible to convert the sugar into energy.

For the vast majority of modern people who live sedentary lifestyles, they are taking in way too much energy which is then stored as fat, hence the explosion in obesity over the past couple of decades.

However, despite your body's best efforts to convert all of the sugar that you eat into energy, it is still likely that a proportion of the sugar you eat will be passed out of your body as waste products. Every time you go to the bathroom, the urine that passes from your body is high in sugars, and it is passed through the one part of your body where you do not need any more sugar!

Cutting the amount of sugar in your diet by a significant percentage is going to reduce your susceptibility to yeast infections by a substantial margin, so it is something that you *must* do if you seriously want to reduce your chances of contracting Candidiasis, or to stop it coming back again.

There is the side-effect benefit that as you cut down on sugar intake, you will lose weight, and eventually, you will feel more healthy and energetic as a result of improving your diet. However, feeling better may not happen immediately, as you will discover in the next chapter.

It does not matter what kind of sugar you are talking about. Whether it is the sugar in fruit juices, honey or the processed stuff in fast foods, it is all still sugar and the more of it you take in, the higher your risk of suffering a yeast infection.

While you are cutting down on sugar, increase your garlic intake, because it is a highly effective decongestant and antifungal agent. It helps to banish toxins from your body, which as you will discover a little later is a very important part of reducing your susceptibility to yeast infections.

It is best if you can eat the garlic raw, because it is [allicin](#), the active ingredient in garlic that gives it its smell, that is powerful against fungus, and allicin is destroyed by the heat involved in cooking.

It is also believed that drinking unsweetened cranberry juice can help to make you less susceptible to Candidiasis, although you must ensure that any cranberry juice that you buy is unsweetened. Most of the popular brands that you see in your local supermarket are unlikely to be any use to you, as they are sweetened.

In order to find the unsweetened variety, it may be necessary to go to a specialized health food or vegetarian store, where it may be possible to buy concentrated cranberry extract in tablet or capsule form. If so, these capsules will be acceptable.

If I am getting better, I certainly don't feel it!

Cutting down on the amount of sugar in your diet is not simply a matter of stopping eating cookies, candy and ice cream, although all of these things will certainly help. If you choose to make a real effort to reduce the sugar in your diet, then what you are doing is embracing a new lifestyle, and as part of that change, your body will need to detoxify itself.

While this is happening, you may find that instead of feeling better, you have to suffer a period of feeling considerably worse than you have felt for some time because of what is known as [the Herxheimer reaction](#).

According to this theory, as your body begins to detoxify itself it will attempt to banish all of the toxic materials, dead bacteria and yeast that your body has accumulated over the years. This process places a considerable strain on your liver and kidneys, which are responsible for purging waste materials from your body.

It is quite likely that your liver and kidneys will not be able to keep up with the purging process, hence the release of some of the toxins and dying materials into your bloodstream. As a result of this, you may feel fever, chills, headaches, nausea and skin problems like spots.

However, be assured that all of these conditions are temporary, and that once your body has purged all of the toxins that have been blighting your life, you will feel better than you have in years, and the chances of you suffering a yeast infection are significantly reduced.

In order to minimize the effects of the Herxheimer reaction, make sure that you are drinking plenty of water, eating a healthy amount of fresh vegetables and getting as much exercise as you can.

Immune system deficiencies and general poor health

Fit, clean and healthy people who follow the guidelines about not wearing clothing that is too tight, people who do not do anything to create an environment where yeast can multiply, are far less likely to suffer yeast infections than those who have weakened immune systems or are in generally poor health.

As with any health-related matter, it is far easier for germs and bacteria to attack your body if your resistance levels are low, so it is in your interests to make sure that this does not happen.

If you are already cutting out a significant percentage of the sugar that you were previously consuming from your diet, you are moving in the correct direction - but you need to do more.

Specifically, the stronger you are, the more capable you will be of resisting any kind of infection, including Candidiasis. As well as improving your diet, you should also make sure that you take a regular exercise, because doing so is going to improve your overall health and fitness which will, in turn, help you to resist any form of infection.

Learning what you can do if you have yeast infection is very important, but it is definitely more effective to make sure that you don't get the infection in the first place. Having a healthy diet, avoiding narcotic drugs and alcohol and taking plenty of regular exercise, will ensure that you become one of the least likely people to contract a yeast infection.

Section summary

- In addition to all of the specific causes that are related to individual types of yeast infections, there are many general situations that can make the onset of a yeast infection more likely.
- These include heightened levels of stress, a sugar rich diet, an over-use of broad spectrum antibiotics, lack of general fitness or health and an immune system that is somehow already weakened.

The 'four strong' defense line

As you know by now, *Candida albicans* is present on your skin and in your gut from the moment you are born. It is reasonable to question why you do not suffer a permanent yeast infection because of the presence of the fungus on your skin.

There are, in fact, four lines of defense that your body has against yeast infections.

The first of these is your skin, which will protect you against infection for ever, as long as that skin remains unbroken. However, all it needs is for the slightest scratch to remove the uppermost skin cell layer, and the yeast is able to sink the tube-like hyphae into your skin.

After that, there are the antibodies that are naturally produced by your body. Although these antibodies do not themselves attack the *Candida albicans* cells directly, they help other cells in your blood to do so.

The next line of defense is the 'good' bacteria cells that we have already mentioned. These cells fight the yeast for the same nutrients, and because they do so effectively, they are able to keep the yeast in check.

The final barrier to yeast infections is your general state of health.

Section summary

- Your body has four lines of defense against yeast infection.
- These are your skin, antibodies, good bacteria and the ability to stay fit and healthy in general.

Why your yeast infection keeps coming back

Two types of yeast infection

There are two types of yeast infection that might affect you.

The first of these is an acute infection, one that is giving you a serious amount of pain or irritation that needs to be dealt with urgently and immediately. In this situation, you need to apply the appropriate treatment as quickly as possible.

The second type of yeast infection is a chronic level of infection, a recurring problem. The pain or irritation levels are probably considerably lower, but the fact that the infection comes back time after time exacerbates the overall problem level.

In this chapter, we are going to consider why your yeast infection keeps coming back in this way.

Remember the hyphe?

When the yeast fungus turns into a mold, these mold cells push tube-like branches called hyphe down into the skin, and you get your infection.

These hyphe dig down into the skin between the cells and get as deeply under the skin as they can. In this way, they ensure that they have maximum access to the biggest possible supply of nutrients so that they can create as many new yeast cells as possible.

Candida albicans has enzymes that destroy healthy cells of the body as a way of generating the nutrients that it needs to keep growing. As the hyphe burrow down into your skin, they create spaces where the mold cells can continue to grow and receive sustenance.

From this unpleasant picture, there should be one factor beginning to emerge. One of the reasons why your Candidiasis keeps coming back is because many of the methods that you use to get rid of it are simply not penetrating deeply enough into your skin to get at the real 'roots' of the problem. In addition, because the hyphe produce chemicals that change the nature of the tissues that they are destroying, it makes it extremely difficult to completely eradicate the problem using treatments like externally applied antifungal creams.

Such things are simply not able to penetrate deeply enough to completely eradicate the problem, so your yeast infection will return with monotonous regularity at the slightest encouragement.

You have to reconsider adopting a holistic approach to your yeast infection problem, getting to the root cause of why the infection keeps coming back.

For example, if you suffer from a pre-existing medical situation that is contributing to the problem and it can be controlled, then better control should minimize the number of infections that you suffer.

A good example of this is if you are currently using Birth Control Pills that you know to be rich in hormones. Stop using them and switch to a different form of birth control or a pill that is lower in hormones.

You have to discover what the root cause of your Candidiasis is and attack that cause at the root. Only in this way can you genuinely hope to get rid of your recurrent yeast infection problems for good.

Section summary

- If your yeast infection is recurring, then the hyphae may have burrowed under your skin to such an extent that antifungal cream cannot attack them deeply enough.
- If you keep getting yeast infections, there may be an underlying cause that has to be found and dealt with before you can turn the situation around

So-called 'cures' to avoid...

So far, we have taken an in-depth look at various types of yeast infection and plenty of things that you can do to help prevent you contracting a yeast infection in the first place.

However, what you probably really want to know is how to get rid of a yeast infection once you have already contracted it. Before dealing with this, there are a few so-called cures that you might read about that you must avoid using at all costs.

Old garlic oil

You might see web sites on the net where it is recommended that you crush garlic, mix it with oil and that you take the resultant garlic oil orally as a way of combating Candidiasis.

While there is nothing intrinsically wrong with this, you may see some sites recommend that you make up a large batch of this oil before storing it in the refrigerator. This is a potentially very dangerous idea, because garlic can contain botulism spores.

In the normal course of events these are not usually going to cause a problem. However, because you have mixed the garlic with oil, you have created an air free environment, which allows the spores to grow. When they do so, they create a very dangerous and [usually fatal poison](#), so if you are going to use garlic oil, make it in very small batches, and do not be tempted to store it for any more than seven days.

Tea Tree Oil

Although using [tea tree oil](#) can help reduce the severity of yeast infection, you should not be tempted to take it orally. Even though it has not been proven that to do so is dangerous, it has equally not been proven that it is safe to do so.

Boric acid

While [Wikipedia describes boric acid](#) as being a weak acid, it is still an acid and there really is no need to put yourself at risk by being tempted to use any yeast infection 'medicine' that contains boric acid.

Put it another way. 98% boric acid powder is now used as a household pesticide, which suggests that it is not safe to ingest it yourself!

Section summary

- There are some yeast infection 'medicines' that you will see recommended on some websites that are either dangerous or unnecessary.

- There is no justifiable reason for taking any of these potions or poisons, so do not be tempted to do so.

General yeast infection treatments

In addition to the treatments that we have already considered for specific types of yeast infection, there are quite a few other things that you can do that will help relieve the severity of your infection, or sometimes prevent it happening in the first place.

We have already established that it is important to try to keep the skin as dry as possible and that while powders that help to do this are well worth trying, you cannot use a powder that contains cornstarch. Remember that loose clothing and unbleached, natural fiber clothing (especially underwear) all help.

There are some natural substances that are known to have antifungal qualities that you should try. Amongst these are tea tree oil (applied externally, it is fine), garlic oil. Then there are other less natural substances which are nevertheless effective like [gentian violet](#).

Using ointments that can reduce skin to skin friction such as Vaseline and lanolin can help prevent the skin damage that allows the *Candida albicans* to invade the body and cause the infection.

Section summary

In addition to specific treatments for particular strains of yeast infection, there are some that can be used to help treat all types of infection.

The importance of phytochemicals

Phytochemicals are the naturally occurring chemical compounds that are found in plants such as fruits and vegetables, and it is widely believed that many of them have distinct health enhancing qualities. For example, garlic, broccoli and citrus fruits are all high in phytochemicals such as sulphurophane, limonene and coumarin.

According to the [Wikipedia definition and reference for phytochemicals](#), it is believed that they can help prevent a wide range of serious medical conditions, like cardiovascular disease, prostate cancer and cataracts, while other phytochemical bearing foodstuffs have anti-inflammatory qualities.

However, it now appears that including a significant portion of foods that are rich in phytochemicals in your diet can provide crucial assistance to your immune system to fight off yeast infections.

Including raw garlic (for example) in your diet will significantly reduce your susceptibility to yeast infections, and it also appears that by combining various different phytochemicals in your diet, you multiply the anti-infection qualities many times over.

For instance, garlic may be effective on its own, but it seems to become considerably more effective when eaten in combination with the vital chemicals from other vegetables such as broccoli.

The problem, however, is that every individual reacts to different phytochemicals in a different way, and there is no way of saying that any particular phytochemical combination is a cure-all for everyone.

That being said, there is increasing evidence that eating a diet of '[superfoods](#)' that is rich in phytochemicals is likely to significantly improve your body's ability to resist any kind of medical problems or infection.

As a 'starting point' for establishing a dietary pattern that is going to build your natural resistance to yeast infections, begin by combining healthy amounts of both raw garlic and broccoli in your daily diet.

From that point on, experiment with as many of the listed superfoods as you can, because you need to establish what works for you.

By making this 'better lifestyle' adjustment to your diet, you will minimize or perhaps even eradicate the chances of your ever contracting another yeast infection. Including phytochemical rich foodstuffs in your diet is an absolute essential.

Section summary

- Including foods that are rich in phytochemicals such as garlic, broccoli, soya and citrus fruits in your diet should significantly reduce your susceptibility to yeast infections.
- More importantly, while every individual phytochemical rich foodstuff might help to build your resistance to yeast infections, it is likely that resistance levels are significantly enhanced when such foodstuffs are eaten in combination with one another.
- Because every one of us is different, the specific phytochemical combination that works best for one individual may not work at all for another. It is therefore up to you to establish what specific combination works best, although starting with garlic and broccoli is recommended.

Conclusion

There is no doubt about it, having any kind of yeast infection is a real 'downer'. Especially for the huge numbers of women all over the world who will suffer from vaginitis, it is a painful and oftentimes embarrassing problem. For many women, the same old problem keeps coming back time after time.

Having read through this book, you now understand why this should be. However, you should now appreciate why antifungal creams and the like are often ineffective and why they are unlikely to prevent the infection coming back.

You have read that there are steps you can take to significantly reduce the likelihood of contracting a yeast infection, and that there are natural antifungal applications such as tea tree oil and garlic oil that you can use to reduce the severity of the problem.

However, it is your general bodily condition, health and lifestyle that make some people far more susceptible to yeast infections than others.

For instance, a high sugar diet that is low in the fruits and vegetables which are rich in phytochemicals is a recipe for suffering yeast infections time after time.

The essential thing to appreciate is that the 'cure' that you have been seeking for your yeast infection problem lies within you.

If you seriously want to banish unpleasant and painful yeast infections from your life for ever, you need to know what is causing them and in the absence of anything else, the finger of blame would be very squarely pointed at your diet and lifestyle.

As any medical professional will tell you, prevention is always far better than having to seek a cure for any medical condition, and yeast infections are no exception to this rule. Having read this book, I hope that you now understand that prevention is nowhere near as difficult as you might previously have imagined.

Now you know the theory, you have to put what you have learned into practice, because otherwise, nothing will ever change. Only you can make the decision to change your lifestyle in the way that you need to once and for all.