

Can I Still Have Sex?

You should not have sex while you are being treated for a yeast infection. Any irritation from sex will slow the healing process.

Whenever you do have sex, be sure to always use *latex or polyurethane condoms*.

Remember: Some yeast medications are oil-based and may weaken a condom or diaphragm. Ask your doctor or nurse about using a back-up method of birth control.

Is a Yeast Infection Dangerous?

A yeast infection will not cause any serious harm to your body or change your ability to have children. However, you still need to get treatment. Sometimes a yeast infection is a sign of other health problems.

What If My Infection Keeps Coming Back?

Yeast infections are common. They can be hard to treat. Sometimes a yeast infection is a sign of other health problems.

- You may need to be checked for diabetes.
- Your partner may have a yeast infection under the foreskin of his penis if he is not circumcised.
- You may need to be checked for HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) or other problems.

You might be confused, angry or sad if your yeast infection keeps coming back. Keep taking your medicine. Talk to your doctor or nurse. They will help you until your infection is under control.

How Can I Protect Myself?

- Wear all-cotton panties.
- Do not wear tight pants.
- Keep the genital area clean and dry.
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Eat one cup of yogurt containing active cultures daily.
- Douche only if ordered by your health care provider.
- Avoid using feminine hygiene deodorants and sprays, and scented toilet paper or sanitary products.
- Urinate after sexual intercourse.

If you have any problems or questions, call your health department or health care provider.



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Yeast Infection



What Is a Yeast Infection?

A yeast infection is a common vaginal infection. The infection is caused by yeast cells that live in the vagina. The infection is sometimes called candidiasis (pronounced KAN duh DI uh sis).

How Do I Get A Yeast Infection?

Yeast cells normally live in the bowel. Yeast cells can sometimes be found in the vagina and cause no problems. Sometimes the conditions in your vagina change and the yeast grows fast and causes an infection. Several things can change the conditions in your vagina and cause the yeast to become a problem:

- Taking birth control pills;
- Taking antibiotics like ampicillin, tetracycline, cephalosporin, or other medicines like metronidazole (used to treat some other vaginal infections);
- Wearing tight clothing or nylon underwear, or staying in a wet bathing suit for a long time;
- Douching;
- Pregnancy;
- Diabetes; or
- HIV infection.

A yeast infection is not usually spread by sexual intercourse. However, if a man has an uncircumcised penis he will have yeast cells under the foreskin. If he does, it is possible to get a yeast infection from sexual intercourse.

What Are the Symptoms?

- A thick white discharge that may look like cottage cheese.
- Itching or burning around the vagina.
- Redness and swelling in and around the vagina.
- Burning when you pass urine.
- Discharge that may smell like fresh bread, but does not smell bad.

Some women do not have any symptoms but still have an infection.

Do I Always Need To See My Doctor or Nurse?

You may want to treat yourself instead of seeing a health care provider if:

- Your health care provider has treated you for a yeast infection before;
- You have no other symptoms;
- You believe you have a yeast infection again.

See your health care provider if:

- Your symptoms do not improve in three days;
- Your symptoms keep coming back;
- You get other symptoms.

How Is a Yeast Infection Treated?

Yeast infections are treated using medicines such as:

- Over-the-counter products such as Monistat-7, Gyne-Lotrimin, Mycelex 7 and Femstat (available without a prescription);
- butoconazole nitrate (sold as Femstat);
- clotrimazole (sold as Lotrimin or Mycelex); or
- miconazole nitrate (sold as Monistat).

These medicines come in the form of creams, tablets or suppositories that are put in the vagina. Some of these medicines are oil-based and may weaken a condom or diaphragm. Ask your doctor or nurse about using a back-up method of birth control.

Here are some tips for using these medicines:

- Use the medicine as ordered, even during your menstrual period.
- Wear a sanitary pad or panty liner to protect your clothing.
- Do not use tampons during treatment.

Take all your medicine. You may begin to feel better after several days, but you need to take all your medicine to cure the infection.

What About My Partner?

Since yeast infections are not usually spread by sexual intercourse, your partner probably would not need to be treated. However, sometimes it is possible to get a repeat yeast infection if your partner is not circumcised. Ask your doctor or nurse to be sure.