

FACTS ABOUT CANDIDIASIS (THRUSH)

What is candidiasis?

Candidiasis of the mouth and throat is a fungal infection that occurs when there is too much growth of a fungus called *Candida*. *Candida* is normally found on the skin or mucous membranes of people. Excessive growth of *Candida* on moist surfaces around the lips, inside the cheeks, and on the tongue is referred to as thrush. Additionally, *Candida* infections can be found in the diaper area, on nails, and in areas where the body forms folds of skin.

What are the symptoms of candidiasis?

People with candidiasis usually have painless, white patches in the mouth. Symptoms may also include pain in the throat and difficulty swallowing. In the diaper area, there may be pink and red patches of skin that are often bordered by red pimples.

How is candidiasis spread?

Most cases of candidiasis are caused by the person's own *Candida* germs which normally live in the mouth or digestive tract. A person has symptoms when too many *Candida* germs grow. In rare circumstances, candidiasis can be transmitted by contact with the saliva or mucus of an infected individual presumably while lesions are present.

Who is at risk for candidiasis?

This disease almost always occurs in people with an already weakened immunity or those who are taking certain antibiotics or medications.

How is candidiasis diagnosed?

A doctor may take a sample by swabbing the infected tissue and look at it under a microscope. If there is evidence of *Candida* infection, the sample will be cultured to confirm the diagnosis.

How is candidiasis treated?

Candidiasis is generally treated with a prescription of antifungal medication, such as nystatin or clotrimazole. Symptoms, which may be uncomfortable, may persist if treatment is not sought.

How is the spread of candidiasis reduced?

1. Keep skin clean and dry.
2. Use antibiotics only as directed by a medical provider.
3. Follow a healthy lifestyle, including proper nutrition.
4. People with diabetes should try to keep their blood sugar under tight control.
5. Follow proper diapering, handwashing, and disinfection of contaminated articles (such as mouthed toys and baby bottle nipples).

Exclude from group setting?

Children with candidiasis do not need to be excluded from child care or school.

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