

Yeast Infection (Thrush, Diaper Rash, Vaginitis)

Yeast infections are caused by a fungus called *Candida*. These infections can present in a variety of forms:

- **Thrush:** also known as oropharyngeal candidiasis or candidiasis of the mouth and throat.
- **Yeast diaper rash:** a skin infection caused by a yeast infection located on the area covered by a diaper.
- **Vaginitis:** a yeast infection in women that infects the vagina.

Transmission

Anyone can get a yeast infection. **This fungus is present in and on the body. A warm environment allows for growth and spread.** A past infection does not make a person immune. Rarely, yeast infections spread via:

- **Person to person.** Transmission may occur from mother to baby while pregnant, during birth, or after the baby is born through breastfeeding.

Yeast infections are common among people who have:

- Weakened immune systems
- Have recently taken antibiotics (or received them through breastmilk)
- Have diabetes

Risk factors:

Thrush:

- Wear dentures
- Take medications that cause dry mouth
- Smoke

Yeast Diaper Rash:

- Urine or stool touching skin for long periods of time (overnight)
- Little to no air circulation on the skin
- Diaper material rubbing on the skin

Vaginitis:

- Are pregnant
- Use hormonal contraceptives (i.e., birth control pills)

Symptoms

The incubation period is unknown. Symptoms depend on the type of yeast infection and can include:

Thrush

- White patches appear on the inside of cheeks, gums, and tongue

Yeast diaper rash

- The diaper area is red
- The redness is worse in the creases and is often surrounded by red pimples
- Rash may look shiny
- Sores, cracking, or oozing is present in severe cases

Vaginitis

- Vaginal irritation, soreness
- Intense vaginal itchiness

- Abnormal discharge
- Pain or discomfort when urinating

Diagnosis

A person is diagnosed by the clinical appearance of the rash.

Prevention

Hand washing is important to prevent all types of yeast infections.

Thrush

- Clean and avoid sharing pacifiers, bottle nipples, toys, and teething rings
- Maintain good oral health
- Rinse mouth or brush teeth after using corticosteroids

Yeast Diaper Rash

- Use highly absorbent diapers and change them frequently
- Clean skin between diaper changes and apply ointment to create a barrier between the skin and diaper
- Do not secure diapers too tightly to allow airflow or leave diapers off for a short period of time

Vaginitis

- Wear cotton underwear
- Take antibiotics as prescribed
- Treatment may prevent the spread to newborns

Treatment

See your health care provider as soon as symptoms appear for treatment options. Treatment options include:

- **Prescription medications**
- **“Over-the-Counter” medications** (non-prescription medications)

For more information about the treatment of yeast infections, contact your health care provider or visit [Candidiasis | Types of Diseases | Fungal Diseases | CDC](#).

Exclusion Guidance

Individuals with yeast infections should not be excluded from work, school, or child care unless the [general exclusions apply](#).

For additional information about yeast infections, contact North Dakota Health and Human Services' Division of Public Health at 800.427.2180.

Resources:

1. Kimberlin, D. W., Barnett, E. D., Lynfield, R., Sawyer, M. H. (2021) Red Book: 2021-2024 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases. 32nd ed. American Academy of Pediatrics. [Candidiasis] [246-252].
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, June 28th). Candidiasis. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved May 30th, 2023, <https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/candidiasis/index.html>.
3. Cleveland Clinic. (2022, January 21). Yeast Diaper Rash. Cleveland Clinic. Retrieved June 2nd, 2023, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22307-yeast-diaper-rash>.

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