



Naturopathic Treatment of Yeast Overgrowth (Candidiasis)

Yeast overgrowth is a pervasive infection, usually stemming from imbalances in the intestines. In a group of people it does not cause any symptoms that could alert them to this infection. Intestinal overgrowth of yeast (also known as Candida) may be associated with skin rashes or redness (in areas of skin folds such as the groin, armpits or under breasts), as well as genital infections. Candida can also spread upwards in the digestive system causing esophagitis (irritation of the esophagus) or thrush (white sticky plaques in the mouth); this is more common in people with weakened immunity (e.g. cancer patients) or poor stomach digestion.

Yeast overgrowth is common in chronic diseases that are classified as autoimmune disorders (e.g. Hashimoto's Thyroiditis, Diabetes, Multiple Sclerosis) and childhood illnesses such as asthma, atopic dermatitis, chronic infections, and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Factors in a person's health history that may point to this yeast overgrowth include use of antibiotics, steroid or hormone medications, or digestive disturbances (Malabsorption, IBS, Crohn's Disease or Ulcerative colitis).

Other symptoms of yeast overgrowth include:

- Unexplained fatigue
- Weak memory, forgetfulness, "spaciness"
- Difficult concentration – feeling as you're "in a fog"
- Irregular bowel movements – constipation or diarrhea (actually loose stools)
- Bloating and/or excessive flatulence
- Cravings for sugars/sweets, carbohydrates (e.g. pasta, rice, baked goods)
- Weight gain and difficulty losing weight

In children look for the following signs or symptoms:

- Stimming – repetitive gestures or behaviours
- Toe-walking
- Decreased eye-contact
- Silly/goofy demeanor (or inappropriate laughter)
- Not engaged
- Echolalia (repeating phrases from books, movies or DVD's as if from a script)

Mainstream health care providers rarely will consider yeast overgrowth as a factor in health problems. Yeast is also difficult to find in tests: stool tests only show yeast in test cultures approximately 10% of the time. Arabinose and other organic acids (urine testing) are proving to be reliable markers to prove the presence of yeast; IgG, IgA or IgM antibodies (blood testing) or DNA detection (urine, blood) are other testing options.



950 Southdown Rd, Unit B5
(Clarkson Crossing Shopping Plaza)
Mississauga, ON L5J 2Y4
Phone: (905) 822-2046
Fax: (905) 822-6228

Touchstone Naturopathic Centre

Treatment:

Diet changes, probiotics, antifungal medicines (herbal, homeopathic or possibly prescription medicines) as well as enzymes are the current mainstay of treating yeast overgrowth. Alkalinization (increasing pH of the digestive tract) and specific immune stimulation may be necessary in chronic conditions. Supplements that heal gastrointestinal inflammation should be used in overall treatment. Expect your treatment to last at least 3 months.

Diet changes: Follow a hypoallergenic diet. Testing that identifies your food intolerances can be arranged by your doctor. Limit your intake of foods containing yeast (e.g. breads, broths), sugars, dairy and high-glycemic foods (those that are high in natural sugars such as melons, bananas, white rice, starches or starchy foods). Please consult with our nutritionist for more details.

Antifungal medicines: Garlic, Grapefruit Seed Extract, Berberine herbs (Goldenseal, Oregon Grape), Olive Leaf, Oregano Oil, and Caprylic acid (consider Medium Chain Triglyceride oil products for children), and P'au D'arco are common effective herbal medicines. Combination products may also be considered. If using single herbs, rotate two or three herbs every 5-7 days to prevent the yeast from becoming intolerant to the medicines. Homeopathic medicines made from *Candida albicans* are available, as are products such as Sanum Pleo Alb or Pleo Exmy. Specific enzyme products such as Candex or Candizyme break down the outer cell wall of yeast.

Probiotics: (beneficial flora): Please speak to your Naturopathic Doctor about your specific circumstances. HMF Super, HMF Intensive or UltraFlora Plus are commonly recommended at Touchstone. *Lactobacillus sporogenes* does have specific antifungal activity along with *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.

Alkalinization: can be achieved by eating more vegetables and less grains and meat in your diet; by increased exercise or deep breathing. Alkalinizing supplements should be considered if there isn't an early change (e.g. PH Balance by Pascoe, or Alkala by Sanum).

Chronic Yeast infections: Consider dairy-free Colostrum or Transfer Factors (products are specifically available for *Candida*).

Prescription medicines: Nystatin or Fluconazole (Diflucan) are best known.

Healing the Digestive Tract: Quercetin, L-Glutamine, gamma-oryzanol, and NAG (N-acetyl-glucosamine) are effective. Digestive enzymes may be necessary early on. Marshmallow, Licorice (in the form of DGL) and Aloe are effective herbal medicines for healing GI inflammation.