

# VAGINITIS, MONILIAL

(Vaginal Yeast Infection)

## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

Infection or inflammation of the vagina caused by a yeast-like fungus (Monilia or *Candida albicans*). Monilial vaginitis causes at least 50% of infections in the vagina.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Severity of the following symptoms varies between women and from time to time in the same woman.

- White, "curdy" vaginal discharge, (resembles lumps of cottage cheese). The odor may be unpleasant, but not foul.
- Swollen, red, tender, itching vaginal lips (labia) and surrounding skin.
- Burning on urination.
- Change in vaginal color from pale pink to red.

### CAUSES

Monilia (or *Candida*) live in small numbers in a healthy vagina, rectum and mouth. When the vagina's hormone and pH balance is disturbed, the organisms multiply and cause infections. Monilial vaginitis tends to appear before menstrual periods and subsides as soon as the period begins. Factors that may disturb the vagina's balance include:

- Pregnancy.
- Diabetes mellitus.
- Antibiotic treatment.
- Oral contraceptives.
- High carbohydrate intake, especially sugars and alcohol.
- Hot weather and/or non-ventilating clothing, which increase moisture, warmth and darkness, fostering fungal growth.
- Immunosuppression from drugs or disease.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

Factors listed under Causes.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Keep genital area clean. Use plain unscented soap.
- Take showers rather than tub baths.
- Wear cotton underpants or pantyhose with a cotton crotch.
- Don't sit around in wet clothing.
- Avoid douches, vaginal deodorants and bubble baths.
- Limit your intake of sweets and alcohol.
- After urination or bowel movements, cleanse by wiping or washing from front to back (vagina to anus).
- Lose weight if you are obese.
- If you have diabetes, adhere to your treatment program.

- Avoid broad-spectrum antibiotics unless absolutely necessary.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Usually curable with 2 weeks of treatment. Recurrence is common. imIBLSTc 0.289Tj 2 weeks of treatment. yWoAlbEt0.285n