

# HEALTH TOPICS

## YEAST INFECTION

### Overview

- Vaginal yeast infections are caused by an overgrowth of a fungus, usually Candida.
- This organism is normally found in small quantities in the vagina, the mouth, digestive tract and skin.
- In normal amounts, this fungus does not cause a problem. When there is an overgrowth of yeast it can cause an inflammation of the vaginal wall and external genitalia, a condition known medically as vulvovaginitis.
- Yeast infections are very common. They are not sexually transmitted.
- Risk factors for yeast infections include;
  - Taking antibiotics,
  - The hormonal changes that occur around one's period,
  - Hot climate,
  - Birth control pills, ring, or patch
  - Tight clothing or underwear, wet, nylon clothing or exercise wear,
  - use of fragranced products in the genital area
  - Diabetes
  - Pregnancy
  - An impaired immune system.

### Signs & Symptoms

- Itching and burning of the vagina or vulva (skin surrounding the vagina)
- Redness and swelling of the vagina or vulva
- Possible burning during urination due to the irritated vulva
- Pain during intercourse
- White, thick or curd-like discharge may be present

### Prevention

- Keep external genitalia clean and dry
- Wear cotton underwear and loose fitting clothing.
- Change from wet bathing suits/athletic clothing as soon as possible
- Wipe from front to back after using the toilet
- Avoid douching
- Avoid harsh soap, bubble baths, perfumed menstrual products

### Treatment

- There are several over the counter creams or suppositories you can use to treat the symptoms if you feel certain you have a yeast infection. These medications are inserted into the vagina at bedtime for 3-7 nights.

- There is a prescription oral medication called Diflucan. The yeast symptoms are generally relieved by taking just one pill orally
- You should see a clinician if;
  1. You are experiencing yeast infection symptoms for the first time.
  2. You are not sure whether you have a yeast infection.
  3. You have a concern about a sexually transmitted infection.
  4. You develop other symptoms
  5. Your symptoms do not go away after self treatment with an over-the-counter antifungal vaginal preparation.
  6. Your symptoms are reoccurring frequently

### How We Can Help

- If you would like to be seen by our medical staff, you can book an appointment [online](#) or by calling our Appointment Desk to [schedule an appointment](#).
- Also, our [Advice Nurse](#) service is free for all UCSB students to discuss health concerns and the options for medical care.
- [Over the counter \(OTC\) products](#) to treat a vaginal yeast infection are available for purchase at our Pharmacy, which is located in the lobby of UCSB Student Health Service

### Recommended Resources

- **Vaginal Yeast Infection** (Mayo Clinic) <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/yeast-infection/basics/definition/con-20035129>
- **Genital/vulvovaginal candidiasis**(CDC)
- <http://www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/candidiasis/genital/ulvovaginal>
- **Vaginal yeast infections** (Up-to-date) <http://www.uptodate.com/contents/vaginal-yeast-infection-beyond-the-basics>