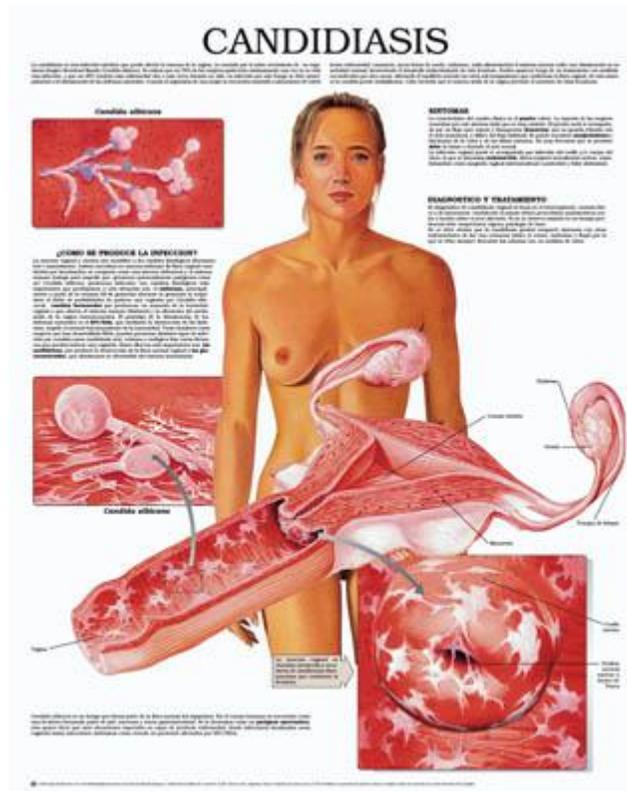


Candidiasis

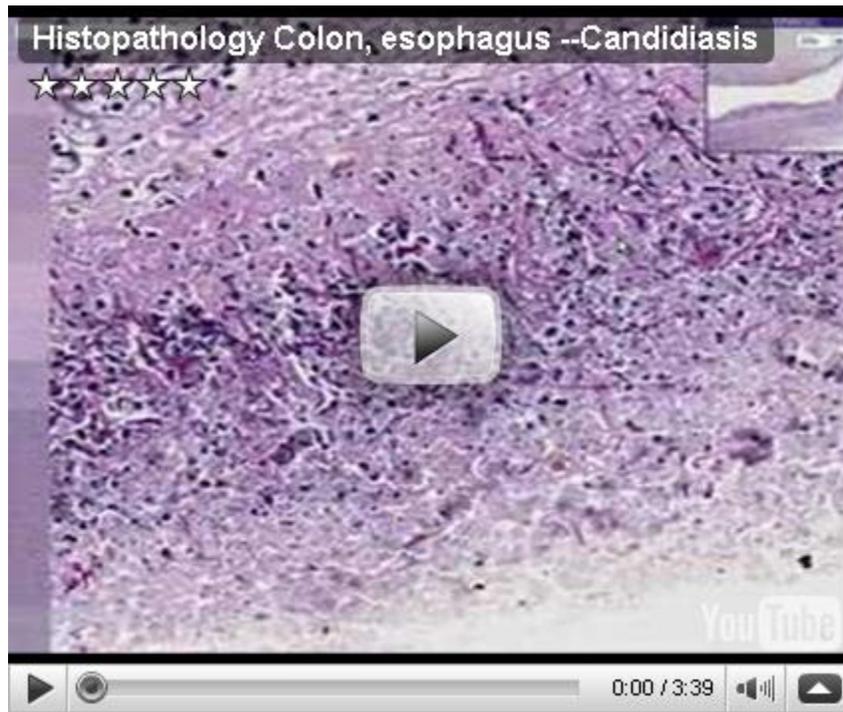
Candidiasis is basically a twentieth century disease, resulting from medical developments like antibiotics, birth control pills, ulcer medications, and estrogen replacement therapy (HRT). And it can be triggered at a very young age, when children are first being treated with antibiotics (ear and throat infections).

Although widespread, candidiasis, or yeast overgrowth, is generally overlooked by the medical establishment because it's symptoms so closely mimic those of other conditions. Alternative physicians, however, recognize the seriousness of candidiasis, and where conventional medicine has often been ineffective in treating candidiasis, various alternative methods offer much hope for success.



Everyone has candida, a form of yeast (*Candida Albicans*), normally confined to the lower bowels, vagina and the skin. In healthy individuals with strong, functioning immune systems, it is harmless and kept in check by "good" bacteria, called Bifidobacteria and Acidophilus. But if the balance of the intestinal environment is altered by a compromised immune system or other factors, then opportunistic candida proliferates, infecting other body tissues. The candida becomes pathogenic, transforming from a simple yeast into an aggressive (mycelial) fungus that can severely compromise one's health. This condition is known as "candidiasis".

According to James Braley, MD, medical director of Immuno Labs, Inc., in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the fungal form of candida appears to permeate the gastro intestinal mucosal lining and breaks down barriers to the blood stream. " When the fungal form of the candida occurs in the body, allergic substances can penetrate into the blood more easily, where they form immense complexes, and even promote food allergy reactions, " Dr Braley says. Since their symptoms are often interrelated, he emphasizes that candidiasis should usually be treated together with food allergies.



Candida is the most dangerous of all the germs that can take over your intestinal tract after being treated with Antibiotics, Cipro or doxycycline.

It is a member of the vegetable family. It is a cousin to "molds". Yeasts are among the oldest living life forms on earth. They are a single celled life form containing no chlorophyll. There are many different types of yeast. Yeasts are common on plant leaves and flowers, on the surfaces of skin and the intestinal tract of animals. The type of yeast that we use to make bread or brew alcoholic beverages is different than Candida. These are thought as food yeasts. Candida is not a food yeast. It is not allowed to be used in the making bread or beer etc. Candida is thought of as pathogenic yeast. Pathogenic means that it can cause disease.

Candida is referred to as "dimorphic", which means it can exist or live in 2 different states or forms. As "yeast" it is a single cell plant life. It has a large, round, thick spore that is shaped like a chicken egg. It is asexual, which means it does not need a mate to reproduce. It reproduces by "budding" or growing buds. Do you recall seeing buds forming on the branches of trees or plants? Candida looks similar. As it grows it resembles a bunch of grapes. As it spreads it grows more branches, which then "buds" more bunches of "grapes". This is the way Candida appears in its other form or state, which is "fungal". Here it looks like lots of little beads strung together by threads. Just like there are safe yeasts, there are safe fungus. Mushrooms are an example of a fungus, which does not produce disease. Eating mushrooms will not cause candida.

Candida eats sugars and some fats that way animals do. This is how it feeds. Candida loves the dark, warm and moist environment of the intestines. It attaches itself to the intestinal wall and when it is in the fungal form tries to bury itself deep into your intestinal lining. It grows roots (like a weed) digging into the lining of your intestinal tract looking for food. When it does this it produces infections and illness in your body.

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Candidiasis can affect areas of the body far removed from candida colonizations in the gastro intestinal tract and vagina. Its symptoms cover a broad spectrum and the condition can cause a number of diseases ranging from allergies, vaginitis, and thrush (that is a whitish fungus in the mouth or vagina), to an invasion of the genital-urinary tract, eyes, liver, heart, or central nervous system. At its most destructive, candidiasis is involved in autoimmune diseases such as; Addison's disease and Aids. Other symptoms of candidiasis, according to Dr Braley, include digestive problems such as bloating, cramping, gas and diarrhea, respiratory problems, coughing, wheezing, earaches, central nervous system imbalances, generalized fatigue, and loss of libido.

Symptoms of Candidiasis

There is a wide array of candidiasis symptoms depending on individual age, sex, environmental exposures, and immune systems. These include, but are not limited to:

Chronic fatigue, especially after eating

Depression

Gastro Intestinal problems such as: bloating, gas, intestinal cramps, chronic diarrhea, constipation, or heartburn

Rectal itching

Allergies (including both food and airborne)

Severe pre-menstrual syndrome

Impotence

Memory loss, severe mood swings, and feeling mentally " disturbed ".

Recurrent fungal infections such as "jock itch", athlete's foot, or ringworm

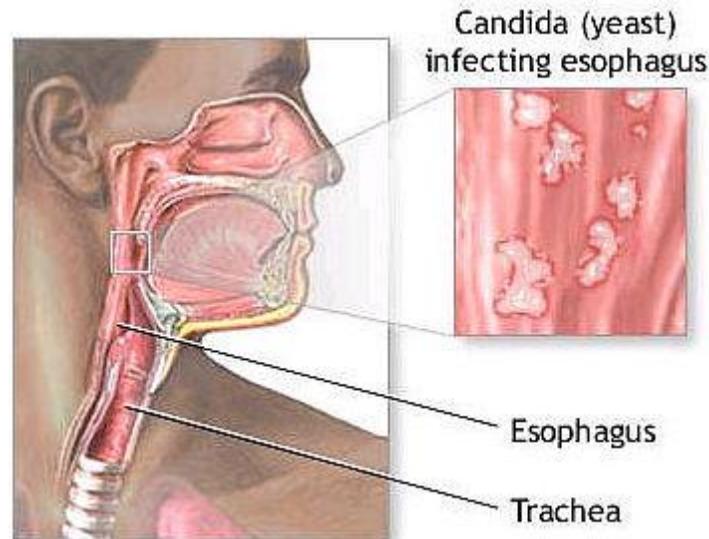
Extreme sensitivity to chemicals, perfumes, smoke, or other odors

Recurrent vaginal or urinary infections

Prostatitis

A feeling of being light headed or drunk after minimal wine, beer, or certain foods

These symptoms worsen in moldy places such as basements or in damp climates, and after eating or drinking yeast or foods containing sugar.



Causes of Candidiasis

Since many of its symptoms are shared with other conditions, candidiasis must be diagnosed by examining predisposing factors in a thorough personal medical history. Leon Chaitow, N.D., D.O., of London England, describes the likely candidate for candida overgrowth as someone whose medical history includes:

Steroid hormone medication such as cortisone, or corticosteroids, often prescribed for skin conditions such as rashes, eczema, or psoriasis; prolonged or repeated use of antibiotics which are frequently given for urinary and ear infections, sinusitis, bronchitis, and other infections; ulcer medications such as "Tagamet" and "Zantac" or oral contraceptives. Certain illnesses such as diabetes, cancer, and AIDS can also increase susceptibility to candida overgrowth.

As Leyardia Black, ND, of Lopez Island, Washington, points out, "Candidiasis is basically a twentieth century disease, a disease resulting from medical developments like antibiotics, birth control pills, and estrogen replacement therapy. It can be triggered at a very young age, when children are first being treated with antibiotics." Dr. Chaitow agrees, "Fully thirty five percent of women using birth control pills have associated causes of acute vaginal candidiasis, and there are undoubtedly many others who have less pronounced evidence of yeast overgrowth as immune competence is gradually compromised by the hormonal onslaught."

Murray Susser, MD, of Santa Monica, California, points out that since yeast infections enter the body easily through the vagina, and yeast festers in estrogen, women of child-bearing age are more vulnerable to candidiasis. Also, women who have been pregnant are susceptible, since hormonal changes encourage candida overgrowth. When men develop candidiasis, antibiotics, high sugar intake, or immune suppression from illness, toxins, and stress, are usually the root cause.

Frequently, candidiasis is caused by a combination of factors. As Dr. Chaitow explains, "All too often more than one influence is operating. Over a few years, a patient may have had several series of antibiotics for a variety of conditions while using steroids as well, perhaps in the form of the

contraceptive pill. If the patient, most commonly a young woman, also happens to be living on a diet which is rich in sugars, then the candida is very likely to have spread beyond its usual borders into new territory."

As Dr. Chaitow points out, when the immune system is completely suppressed, as in Aids, yeast proliferates freely and colonizes the body and blood stream, leading to septicemia (blood poisoning). In less drastic but more prevalent cases, the immune system is temporarily suppressed and T-helper cells (lymphocytes which pass into the blood stream to help fight infection) are destroyed. Such immune suppression can be due to any number of factors, such as poor diet including ingestion of pesticides and preservatives, alcohol use, chemotherapy, radiation, exposure to environmental toxins, antibiotics which injure or destroy the T-cells, and stress. Consequently, conditions are created for opportunistic infections and yeast to grow.

Antibiotics

According to Dr. Sausser, antibiotics may be the single greatest cause of candidiasis, because antibiotic treatment for infections is non discriminatory, killing the "good " intestinal chemistry-balancing bacteria, as well as the " bad " infection-causing bacteria. Both acidophilus and bifidobacteria produce natural antifungal substances as well as antibacterial materials as part of their control mechanism over yeast. One of the activities of the good bacteria is the manufacture of a B vitamin, biotin, which exerts control over yeast. When biotin is lacking, as a result of damage by antibiotics to acidophilus, bifidobacteria, and the microflora ecology, yeast has a chance to change from its simple yeast form into a different organism, an encroaching mycelial (vegetative) fungus.

Antibiotics can cause the altered imbalanced intestinal environment that candida requires to change into its mycelial form. Dr. Chaitow explains, " Candida puts down minute rootlets which penetrate the tissues on which the yeast is growing. When this happens to be the inner wall of the intestines, it breaks down the barrier which exists between the closed world of the bowel and the body. Toxic debris, yeast waste products, and partially digested proteins are allowed into the blood stream, resulting in allergic and toxic reactions."

Healthy bifidobacteria and acidophilus intestinal colonies can usually withstand one or two short episodes of antibiotics without serious harm. If, however, use of antibiotics is frequent or prolonged as with a course for acne treatment or an infection, then the spread of candida becomes inevitable. " A vicious cycle may develop as a result, antibiotics alter the balance of intestinal flora and suppress the immune system. An individual with suppressed immune function is much more susceptible, not only to candidiasis but to bacterial infections, which are then treated with antibiotics, which, in turn, increase the growth of candida and so on," says Dr. Chaitow.

Diet

According to Dr. Sausser, sugar in the diet can greatly contribute to candida overgrowth. When sugar is eaten, intestinal fermentation creates a toxin called Acetaldehyde which affects all of the body's physiological functions, including digestion and hormonal processes. Yeast thrives on sugar in order to grow, therefore, a high-sugar diet is one of the predisposing factors for candidiasis.
Alcohol

Candidiasis patients should also stay away from all alcohol since it is composed of fermented and refined sugar. It is also more toxic than sugar and feeds yeast. According to Dr. Sausser, alcohol suppresses the immune system, disturbs the whole adrenal axis, and you can say empirically that it makes anyone with candida worse.

Some candidiasis sufferers will feel, and appear to be, intoxicated. An unusual symptom of certain

people with severe candidiasis is the presence of alcohol in the blood stream even when none has been consumed. First discovered in Japan, and called "drunk disease," this condition creates strains of candida albicans which turn acetaldehyde (which is the chemical created by sugar and yeast fermentation) into ethanol. This is a process well understood by distillers of homemade brew. These candidiasis patients whose yeast turns sugar into alcohol are chronically drunk. They have developed what is only half-jokingly called "auto-brewery syndrome".

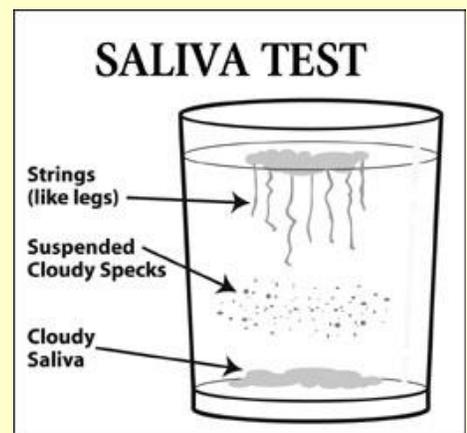
A medical test has been developed in which, after an overnight fast, the individual is given 100 grams of pure sugar. Blood samples taken both before the sugar loading, and an hour after, are measured for alcohol. An increase of alcohol indicates yeast "auto-brewery" intoxication. Another connection between alcohol and candidiasis has been found in a study of 213 alcoholics at a recovery center in Minneapolis. Test and questionnaire results indicated that candidiasis is a common complication of alcoholism due to the combination of high sugar content in alcohol and the inability of alcoholics to assimilate nutrients. Additionally, female alcoholics with candidiasis were significantly sicker than non alcoholic women with candidiasis.

Many of the symptoms exhibited in alcoholism such as insomnia, depression, loss of libido, headaches, sinusitis/post-nasal drip, digestion and intestinal complaints, overlap with those in candida overgrowth. Obviously, drinking alcohol increases levels of sugar in the system. But other habits of alcoholics are also at fault. Many alcoholics tend to be smokers and so are at risk for respiratory infections which are treated with ... antibiotics !

Treating Candidiasis

Successful treatment of candidiasis first requires the reduction of factors which predispose a patient to candida overgrowth. Secondly, the patient's immune function must be strengthened. Diet, nutritional supplements, herbal medicine, ayurvedic medicine, Bob Beck's protocols, Rife and acupuncture are some of the choices alternative physicians use to accomplish these ends.

Try this simple test to see if you have candida. First thing in the morning, before you put ANYTHING in your mouth, get a clear glass. Fill with water and work up a bit of saliva, then spit it into the glass of water. Check the water every 15 minutes or so for up to one hour. If you have a candida yeast infection, you will see strings (like legs) traveling down into the water from the saliva floating on the top, or "cloudy" saliva will sink to the bottom of the glass, or cloudy specks will seem to be suspended in the water. If there are no strings and the saliva is still floating after at least one hour, you are probably candida yeast free.



Diet :

In order to overcome candidiasis, sugar must be avoided in all its various forms. These include : sucrose, dextrose, fructose, fruit juices, honey, maple syrup, molasses, milk products (which contains lactose), most fruit (except berries), and potatoes (whose starch converts into sugar). Dr Black says, " In treating candida, my basic dietary taboos are sweets, alcohol, and refined carbohydrates." Many candidiasis sufferers also have allergies and sensitivity to various foods. Although candida albicans yeast is not synonymous to yeast in foods, such as bread, a cross-reaction between the food yeast and candida frequently occurs. As a result, foods containing or promoting yeast, such as baked goods, alcohol, and vinegar, should be avoided until possible sensitivities are clearly diagnosed.

Dr Black states that some of her patients are very sensitive to yeast and do better staying away from yeast containing foods. To test for such sensitivity, she takes patients off all yeast containing foods for a week. Then she adds such foods back in the diet, one at a time. If the symptoms reappear, then clearly yeast containing foods should be avoided. Similarly, Dr Braly employs a rotation diet when he suspects food allergies. On this regiment, patients avoid certain suspected allergic foods and rotate non allergic food every four or more days. They are then later reintroduced to the suspected foods after three to six months to see if symptoms are provoked. Molds are another aspect of candida sensitivity. These include food molds found in cheeses, grapes, mushrooms, and fermented foods, and also environmental molds found in wet climates, in damp basements, in plants and outdoors. Molds and yeast can also exchange forms. Therefore, the ingestible molds of cheeses and fermented foods should be avoided. Avoiding food yeast and molds does not attack the candida yeast itself, but is an attempt to ease stress on the immune system caused by substances that can trigger allergies.

Dr Susser also advises patients to avoid yogurt because of its high sugar content, despite its high concentration of lacto-bacilli, which suppresses "bad" bacteria and keeps other organisms under control. He finds that freeze-dried [acidophilus](#) supplements in capsule form are more effective in combating bacteria than even unsweetened raw yogurt. Candida growth can also be fostered in the diet through consumption of meat, dairy, and poultry products due to the heavy use of antibiotics. Traces of antibiotics given to dairy cows can later show up in milk. Meat eaters should make sure that meat is free of antibiotic contamination. Organic (hormone and antibiotic free) meat and poultry should be consumed whenever possible. For candidiasis patients, sea food (free of mercury toxins) and vegetable protein are preferable since they are not only antibiotic free, but lower in fat. According to Dr Chaitow, both bifido-bacteria and [acidophilus](#) should be supplemented during candidiasis treatment to help repopulate the bowel, and for antifungal activity. This "good" bacteria supplementation is called "Pro-biotics". Dr Chaitow also recommends that other pro-biotic products such as lactobacillus vulgaricus, be used to assist the colonizing activities of bifido-bacteria and acidophilus.

Nutritional Supplements

According to Dr Chaitow, a general nutritional support program is frequently needed to help build up immune function and digestive efficiency, which may have become severely depleted or compromised after months or years of chronic candidiasis. Specific nutritional supplementation can be helpful in rebuilding weakened immune function. Recommended supplements include individual [B Vitamins](#) which increase antibody response and are used in nearly every body activity, [Vitamin C](#) which stimulates adrenaline and is essential to immune processes, Vitamin E the lack of which depresses immune response, Vitamin A which builds resistance to infection and increases immune response, and beta-carotene a Vitamin A precursor which increases T-cells. Antioxidant immune boosters, such as selenium, calcium, and zinc, are also very useful in combating candidiasis. Other adrenal stimulants are chromium, magnesium, and glandular adrenal (an extract). Essential fatty acids such as evening primrose oil may be considered as well. As routine supplementation, Dr Braly offers the following regiment : Vitamin C - 8-10 grams daily, [Vitamin E](#) - one 400 IU daily, Evening Primrose oil - 6-8 capsules daily, Max EPA - 6 capsules daily, Pantothenic Acid - 250 mg daily, Taurine - 500-1000 mg daily, Zinc Shelate - 25-50 mg daily, [Goldenseal Root](#) extract with no less than 5% hydrastine - 250 mg twice daily, lacto-bacillus acidophilus - 1 dried teaspoon three times daily, if allergic to milk use non-lactose acidophilus. Dr Braly also recommends supplementation of hydrochloric acid "HCl". He notes that aging, alcohol abuse, food allergies, and nutrient deficiencies create a lack of HCl in the stomach which prevents food from digesting and permits candida overgrowth. Such supplementation, he says, helps restore the proper balance of intestinal flora. Dr Braly recommends one capsule of HCl and pepsin at the start of meals, increasing cautiously to 2 to 4 capsules with each meal if needed.

Herbal Medicine

Herbs are often used to kill harmful yeasts and shore up immune function. They are used in teas, dried in capsules or tablets, or taken in suppository form. Herbs which contain [berberine](#) (an alkaloid found in the berbercia family) have proven particularly useful anticandida agents. These include Goldenseal, Oregon Grape, and [Barberry](#).

Berberine fights candida overgrowth, normalizes intestinal flora, helps digestive problems, has antidiarrheal properties, and stimulates the immune system by increasing blood supply to the spleen. Soothing to inflamed mucous membranes, it can be taken as a tea, or in other fluid and dry forms. Other antifungal and antibacterial herbs include German [Chamomile](#), [Aloe Vera](#), [Ginger](#), [Cinnamon](#), [Rosemary](#), [Licorice](#), and [Tea Tree Oil](#). [Fennel](#), [Anise](#), [Ginseng](#), [Alfalfa](#) and [Red Clover](#) are also effective.

Dr Braly's first line of attack on candidiasis is caprylic acid, only after which, if there is no improvement, will he use drugs. Since caprylic acid is readily absorbed into the system, it should be taken in enteric or sustained release forms. Dr Braly also likes Goldenseal Root extract, standardized to 5% or more of it's active ingredient, hydrastine, 250 mg twice daily. In a recent study Goldenseal seemed to work better in killing off candida than other common anticandida therapies, adds Dr Braly. Other fatty acids derived from olives (oleic acid) and castor beans have also been found to be useful.

Dr Susser point out however, that caprylic acid is far from a panacea. " It's most useful," Dr Susser says, " when you combine it with a good diet, allergy care, the right nutrients, acidophilus, and other treatments."

Garlic, a well-known folk remedy, is a particularly effective antifungal agent. It has been shown to be effective against some antibiotic resistant organisms and can be taken in capsule and deodorized form. In cases of vaginal candidiasis, it can be used as a suppository or douche.

[Pau d'Arco Bark](#), obtained from a tropical tree native to Brazil, has long been used to treat infections, intestinal complaints, and genital ailments (cystitis, prostatitis). It is reported to be an analgesic, an antiviral, a diuretic, and a fungicide. However, many products claiming to contain Pau d'Arco have only trace amounts, or even none of the herb. These products also may use a part of the tree other than the bark, or may have been damaged in production and shipping. When purchasing products with Pau d'Arco, be sure that they contain lapachol, an organic compound known for it's antibiotic action.

Ayurvedic Medicine

According to Virender Sodhi, MD (Ayurveda), ND, Director of the American School of Ayurvedic Sciences, in Bellevue Washington, Ayurvedic medicine considers candidiasis to be a condition caused by ama, the improper digestion of foods. Dr Sodhi attributes candidiasis to the widespread use of antibiotics, birth control pills, hormones, and to environmental stresses, as well as to society's addiction to sugar in the diet.

" Ayurvedic medicine believes that these stresses on the system cause carbohydrates to be digested improperly," he says. " Furthermore, the immune system in the gut becomes worn down." From an Ayurvedic perspective, Dr Sodhi believes that successful treatment of candidiasis depends on strengthening the immune system and improving digestion through stimulation of the secretory IgA. This can be accomplished through a combination of treatments. Grapefruit Seed Oil and Tannic Acid are useful in treating candida overgrowth, since, according to Dr Sodhi, they act as antifungals and antibiotics. He uses, additionally, long pepper, trikatu, ginger, cayenne, and neem before meals to increase immunoglobulin and digestive functions. " These herbs increase the mucous by stimulation of the globular cells in the stomach," Dr Sodhi says.

Dr Sodhi begins dosage with a quarter teaspoon of herbs, about thirty minutes before each meal, with dosage increasing gradually to 8 to 10 teaspoons of herbs a day. He also uses acidophilus, and

recommends that his patients cleanse toxins from their systems using the pancha karma program, which involves dietary modification and the use of herbs. Results from Dr Sodhi's approach usually occur within 4 to 6 months.

Acupuncture

William Michael Cargile, BS,DC, FIACA, Chairman of Research for The American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, has successfully used acupuncture on patients with candidiasis. He advises, " I would start by using meridians which influence genital function, spleen, and stomach. These are yin meridians and they correspond to areas of immune system enhancement. You want to normalize the metabolism of the cells in that part of the body." But Dr Cargile adds that treatment is "a waste of time" if the patient doesn't also pay attention to nutrition, which he calls " a significant solution " .

Dr Cargile cites a 41 year old female patient who suffered from severe candidiasis. She was a single mother of three children, who had chronic low-grade sore throats and was taking five antibiotic prescriptions. " This had been going on at least three years," Dr Cargile says. " She was constantly bloated, had colonic distension, and had oral thrush so bad it looked like cotton sticking down her throat. She had clearly destroyed the balance of her intestinal flora."

Dr Cargile gave her a gargle solution of Tea Tree Oil which reduced the pathogens. He had her change her diet and douche with liquid acidophilus, and gave her acupuncture treatments through meridians which reached the larynx and throat. " After three treatments over a period of three weeks, she was 90% better," he states. " She had no oral candida like before, and was well on the road to recovery.

Recovery :

Although self-help is therapeutic for candidiasis, a health regimen should be undertaken with the guidance of a practitioner who understands the condition and is willing to try a variety of treatment options. Recovery from chronic candidiasis seldom takes less than three months and is usually well advanced by six months, but it can take longer to recover completely. Medical studies show that until bowel candida is under control, local manifestations will continue to appear (such as vaginal thrush). Local treatment alone (for thrush, or other symptoms) is not enough.

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