

## **Candida Albicans and Yeast Infections**

**A fairly common complaint that practitioners of alternative medicine treat is one of Candidiasis or Candida Albicans frequently called just plain Candida. There are actually 400 different types of micro-organisms that inhabit the intestinal tract and Candida Albicans is the one most notoriously noted to overgrow and create havoc in the body. Symptoms of Candida are so varied and may mimic other conditions. The most common symptoms are vaginal yeast infections, fatigue, digestive disturbances such as gas and bloatedness, irritable bowel syndrome, and food allergies. Other symptoms that are commonly listed in books about Candida but one might not readily see a connection to are, arthritic complaints, coughs, headaches, dizziness, itching, prostatitis, numbness or tingling, poor memory, mood swings, asthma, recurring ear infections, frequent urination, postnasal drip, menstrual irregularities, bad breath, heartburn and the list goes on.**

**Since Candida normally lives on your mucous membranes and is usually considered a friendly co-inhabitant of the body one must understand what allows it go overgrow to the point that it releases toxins and makes you sick. One must also realize that yeast organisms are incapable of creating symptoms in a healthy body. Because everyone has Candida in their body you have to stop thinking in terms of whether or not you have Candida, it's more important to know if the Candida you have is being kept in check by your immune system. The number one trigger for a Candida bout is the use of antibiotics, especially for a prolonged use of time. The antibiotics, although frequently necessary to take will also kill off healthy flora in the intestines referred to as acidophillus. The use of birth control pills encourage in susceptible individuals yeast overgrowth, as well as ingesting a diet high in processed and refined foods, exposure to environmental toxins - from drinking water or household molds, or outgassing from carpets or mattresses (in sensitive individuals), prolonged and extreme amounts of stress, and nutritional deficiencies.**

**The bottom line is that anything that stresses and weakens the immune system is a potential trigger for Candida to overgrow. One might ponder the thought, did my weakened immune system allow the Candida to overgrow or did the Candida overgrow and weaken my immune system. It probably varies with each individual and really doesn't matter because two things are necessary in either case, to evaluate and strengthen the immune system and to come in with some natural and potent anti-fungals to eradicate the yeast that did overgrow.**

**Many people that I have seen over the years that have told me they have yeast or Candida are under the belief that it takes years to get rid of or that they can never get rid of it completely. They have read many books on the topic, followed many protocols and are still not well. Although it is worth while reading some of these books ( "The Yeast Connection" by William Crook M.D., or Candida - A Twentieth Century Disease by Shirley Lorenzani, Ph.D.) I am at odds with the treatments offered and believe that there are much quicker and more efficient means of clearing up this condition. If the treatments offered by many of the various authors worked, people wouldn't be so chronically afflicted. It's not to say that some don't get better but the patients that I have treated seemed to get no where fast with the so called standard protocols.**

**I will talk about some of the traditional treatments but first let me tell you about the missing links and what I believe keeps people chronically sick. In a sick depleted body things overgrow. The body is usually toxic and giving an antifungal whether natural or a prescription isn't going to fix the underlying imbalance in the body. Generally speaking people with chronic ailments have chronic adrenal exhaustion, toxic livers where the body is literally holding on to toxins that they have been exposed to such as heavy metals, insecticides and pesticides, industrial contaminants, etc. Chronic adrenal exhaustion which can be measured through a four sample saliva specimen for cortisol levels will lead to a depletion of Secretory IgA which is something that protects the lining of our gut and gives the intestines the ability to fight off toxins**

such as bacteria and yeasts. Once this level is low it has to be restored before your body will be able to keep Candida in check. Secretory IgA can also be measured through a saliva sample. Trying to fix Candida by just using antifungals and dietary restrictions is futile if the basic defense mechanisms that keep Candida from coming back have been destroyed or hampered. Furthermore if the liver is toxic and it practically always is with chronic cases the intestines become too alkaline and Candida can thrive in an alkaline environment. The environment of the gut can only be changed by having a liver that is properly detoxifying and proper adrenal function. Then and only then will your dietary restrictions and use of the proper nutrients do what they're suppose to do. These are the factors that are too frequently overlooked and will keep people chronically ill, not with just Candida but other chronic conditions such as Chronic Fatigue, Epstein-Barr Virus, Fibromyalgia, etc..

The usual protocol for Candida can be found in any book on the topic but the dietary changes recommended usually avoid most carbohydrates such as grains, fruits, sugars, all processed foods, alcohol, vinegar, processed and cured meats, coffee and tea, yeasts and cheeses. The reasoning is that carbohydrates especially in fruits are broken down into simple sugars which feed the yeast. The Candida toxins can produce acetylaldehyde which is like formaldehyde in the intestines and can make one feel as if they ingested alcohol. The exact dietary recommendations can be found in any book on the topic but here again I am at odds with these very stringent restrictions. The average person cannot follow this diet for any extended period of time. I do individual food sensitivity testing and find there are many exceptions for many patients and that such a restrictive diet is rarely necessary and if so for a very limited time. When people are reading books you are being told of everything possible that might be bad but it doesn't necessarily mean it is bad for you. Once the liver improves in functioning and adrenal function begins to improve many food irritants go away. If the diet worked and not eating these foods really starved the yeast and allowed the body to recover no one would have yeast. What about people that eat tons of starches, fruits, sugars, yeast, and other junk foods? Some get away with it

because they have a great detoxifying liver and good adrenals. Diet is important but it should be tailored to each person as every patient has a different chemistry and reacts in their own unique ways to foods!

The traditional protocols found in many books are to take various antifungals and immune supporting nutrients. Caprystatin is a known antifungal but probably more powerful is undecyenoic acid, both can be found in the health food stores. A homeopathic preparation of Candida Albicans is certainly worth trying along with a good source of Acidophillus many of which have a broad spectrum of flora that should keep the Candida in balance. Garlic is considered antifungal, as well as grapefruit seed extract, herbs such as Pau d'Arco also called Taheebo tea, barberry root, couchgrass herb, oils such as flaxseed and primrose are recommended. Many of the vitamins such as the B complex, vitamin E and C are suggested in most books as well as fiber for the gut. To be quite honest with you as I read the suggestions in most books I become somewhat disturbed. I know from my experience that many people are reactive and sensitive to the very nutrients suggested. Perhaps there are people that do well with these universal protocols and it is logical to think that I only see the ones that get no where with these suggestions. My thoughts if you are a sufferer is to follow the protocols in a book and see how you do. Only add in one supplement at a time for a two day period. If you feel worse you may be reactive to that supplement or it could also be what is referred to as a "die off" reaction. You will have to use your own instincts to guide you. Proceed slowly and listen to what your body tells you. There will be some that can get better this way and it certainly is less expensive than seeing a health care provider. If it isn't working after a period of time and you feel you can't do this yourself you need professional help. It is difficult for most to figure out how to fix your liver and adrenals, what supplements to take, which foods and substances are bad for you, how to unload chemical exposures etc.. With an experienced alternative health care provider you should be on the road to regaining your health and there is reason to be optimistic that you will feel well again the way you did before you ever developed this illness. Actually you should

even feel better because by the time you are done with your therapy you should have a much better appreciation of your body, what foods are right for you and what supplements are right for you.

It is almost impossible to tell you what to take for your liver and adrenals because there are so many supplements on the market and what helps one person's liver may actually be toxic to someone else. Although milk thistle is a very popular liver formula and does a good job at enhancing liver detoxification it sometimes weakens sensitive patients. Although many of the B vitamins are supportive to the adrenals it frequently reacts negatively with many patients until they are desensitized. Individual testing is the answer. Just as you wouldn't expect your medical doctor to guess what you might need before he sees and examines you the same principle applies here especially if you already attempted self care without success. People frequently believe that if vitamins, minerals, or herbs don't help that they can't hurt. This is not true, they are not necessarily benign and can make matters worse. Eating well, getting rid of processed foods and other foods on the list certainly will not make matters worse and potentially can make a big difference. If you have tried supplements and the diet and still have a problem then it is time to seek a health care professional well versed with Candida.

*Dr. Silverman is a chiropractor and state certified nutritionist who has been in practice for 20 years. He has taught college level courses in holistic health and nutrition and has appeared on many TV and radio shows including the Gary Null show and News 12. He has lectured and consulted for several homeopathic and nutritional companies and has two offices, one in Hauppauge(631-724-6780) and one in Roslyn (516-484-0776.)*