



Yeast Infection

A Common Type of Vaginal Infection



Vaginitis (vaj-uh-nahy-tis) is an infection of the vagina.

Yeast Infection is one of the three most common types of vaginitis. About 75% of women will have a yeast infection in their lifetime.

What are the signs?

Yeast Infection may cause:

- Vaginal itching or irritation
- Unusual discharge (fluids) from the vagina that looks like cottage cheese
- Pain during sex or urinating

What causes a yeast infection?

It is caused by too much fungus growing in the vagina. This type of fungus can cause infections in other moist areas of the body. For example, it can cause thrush (infection of the mouth) and diaper rash. It usually cannot be spread during sex.

Who is at risk?

- Women who are taking medicines such as antibiotics or steroids
- Women with diabetes
- Women undergoing hormonal changes, e.g., if they are pregnant, take birth control pills, or have menopause
- Women using douches or other vaginal cleaning products

What to do if you have a yeast infection?

See your doctor as soon as you see signs of a yeast infection since the signs of a yeast infection are similar to signs of more serious infections such as some sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Once your doctor has diagnosed a yeast infection, he or she will prescribe some medicine and tell you what to do.

If you often have yeast infections, you should have a blood sugar test to see if you are diabetic. You can also talk to your doctor about getting over-the-counter medicines to relieve the discomfort and treat the infection.

Tips on preventing a yeast infection

- Avoid baths, hot tubs and whirlpool spas.
- Rinse your outer genital area with clean water, and dry the area well.
- Wipe from front to back after using the toilet.
- Don't use scented or harsh soaps, tampons and pads.
- Don't use douches or other products to clean your vagina.
- Use a male condom while having sex.
- Wear cotton underwear.
- Limit the intake of alcohol and sugar.
- Eat yogurt that contains live and active bacterial cultures (read the food label). Eating yogurt may help prevent yeast infections from coming back.

