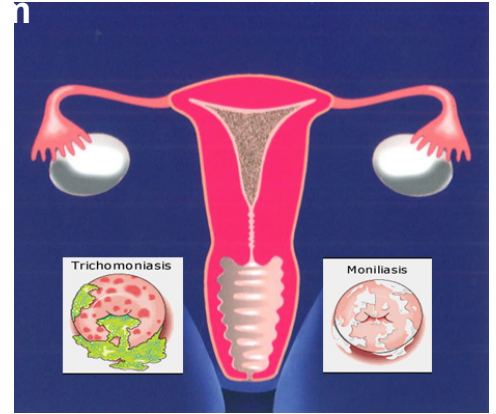


Candidiasis

Candidiasis is a yeast infection of the vagina. It is not a sexually transmitted disease. It is a common infection affecting 3 out of 4 women in some point of their lifetime. About 10% of women have recurrent Candidiasis, that is, having 4 or more infections in a year. Despite its recurrence, Candidiasis is highly treatable and does not lead to cancers.



CAUSES OF CANDIDIASIS

Candidiasis arises when the balance of normal Lactobacillus bacteria in the vagina is overcome by an overgrowth of Candida. This occurs in

- ❖ pregnancy
- ❖ antibiotic use or douching that reduces or washes away the Lactobacillus population
- ❖ estrogen hormone that increases the Candida levels
- ❖ uncontrolled diabetes or impaired immune system
- ❖ use of scented tampons & pads, bubble baths, feminine sprays that increase the vaginal pH

SYMPTOMS OF CANDIDIASIS

Sometimes Candidiasis may not cause any symptoms. Sometimes they cause

- ❖ itch and irritation in the vagina and at the entrance
- ❖ burning sensation during intercourse and while urinating
- ❖ redness, soreness, swelling and pain at the vaginal entrance
- ❖ thick, white, odor-free vaginal discharge with cottage cheese appearance

TREATMENT OF CANDIDIASIS

- ❖ Anti-fungal (eg. Clotrimazole, Miconazole, Nystatin) in the form of creams, vaginal pessaries or oral tablets. A one-time treatment of 2-7 days is effective in 80% of cases. For recurrent cases, weekly treatment for 6 weeks, or around the menstrual period, may be needed.
- ❖ Anti-itch medication and gentle feminine washes.
- ❖ Probiotics and supplements to reduce the vaginal pH.
- ❖ Treatment of your partner is not needed unless there are similar symptoms.

PREVENTION OF CANDIDIASIS

The frequency of Candidiasis can be reduced by

- ❖ avoiding douching, using scented tampons, bubble baths and feminine sprays
- ❖ wearing cotton underwear and loose-fitting pants or skirts
- ❖ avoiding tight-fitting underwear, pantyhose or jeans
- ❖ changing out of wet clothing as soon as possible
- ❖ taking a balanced diet with some probiotics & yogurt with Lactobacillus



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