



## Nutri Patient Information Guide # 8

### Could *Candida* be causing your health problems?

**Do you suffer from any of the following symptoms of ill health?**

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Bloating
- Vaginal thrush
- Sensitivity to perfumes, chemicals and tobacco smoke
- Feelings of irritability
- Depression
- Recurrent sore throats
- Nasal congestion
- Joint swelling and discomfort

If so you could well be suffering from a yeast overgrowth commonly known as candida.

#### **So What Is Candida?**

*Candida albicans* is a common yeast that lives naturally and in harmony in our intestines. In women it is also found in the vagina. It is kept in check by the beneficial bacteria that co-exist with it. However, under certain circumstances, it can become what is known as an "opportunistic pathogen" and produce a wide array of symptoms.

#### **How Does It Get Out Of Hand?**

There are several factors which can cause *Candida albicans* to overgrow. Frequent use of steroidal drugs and antibiotics can depress the levels of beneficial bacteria. Oral contraceptives induce hormone changes which can increase candida levels. Diets high in nutrients on which yeast thrive (i.e. sugars and other refined simple carbohydrates) encourage yeast overgrowth. Factors which depress the immune system can allow the opportunistic pathogen to multiply - steroidal drugs, frequent infections and a poor diet in general.

#### **How Do I Know I've Got Candida?**

Symptoms of candida overgrowth can be very diverse. The yeast cells are thought to have fungus-like properties and attach themselves to the intestines by "roots". This causes damage to the wall of the intestine making it "leaky" and allowing particles of partially digested food to pass through into the blood stream. This leads to an immune reaction and inflammation which causes symptoms like bloating, migraine, diarrhoea and other allergy type reactions. Bacteria can ferment undigested food particles which leads to further bloating and flatulence. Candida produces toxic by-products which weaken the already compromised immune system and leave the sufferer fatigued and drained. One of the toxins is acetaldehyde, which is the same chemical found in excessive amounts in cheap wine and is responsible for hangovers. Many candida sufferers often report feeling chronically "hung over". Other problems associated with candida are frequent nose, ear and throat infections, mood swings, pre-menstrual syndrome, muscular aches and pains and cravings for sweet sugary foods, as well as frequent urogenital infections including itching and discharge.

#### **Laboratory Diagnosis**

Great Smokies Diagnostic Laboratory have various diagnostic tests available which are specifically designed for candida overgrowth analysis. These tests could be used to confirm that you do indeed have a candida problem. Your health care professional will be able to order these tests for you.

### **How Can I Treat Candida?**

In order to bring candida under control naturally, various methods may be employed. A low yeast, low carbohydrate diet, coupled with nutritional supplements to help boost the immune system, along with natural antifungal agents to destroy the candida, and probiotics (which are beneficial bacteria to help redress the balance of the gut) can all be used simultaneously.

### **Anti-Candida Diet**

A low yeast, low carbohydrate diet is one that eliminates all foods containing these substances - wine, vinegars, marmite and bread made with yeast. Carbohydrates are found in many foods - pasta, bread, biscuits, sweets, sugars, cakes and sugar itself. Speak to your health care practitioner for more information on such a diet.

### **Boosting the Immune System**

Nutritional supplements which help to boost the immune system are extremely important in an anti-candida regime. Cat's Claw, an ancient herb from Peru, is a potent immune booster. Echinacea is another natural herb that has very good immune boosting properties. Vitamin A, vitamin C and the mineral zinc may also help strengthen the immune system.

### **Natural Antifungals**

Supplements which contain natural antifungal agents should also be employed during an anti-candida regime. Garlic, citrus seed extract and caprylic acid are three well known, antifungal agents. The culinary herbs oregano, basil and thyme may be helpful in eliminating a yeast overgrowth. Other nutrients such as niacin, manganese and molybdenum can also be included as these help the body detoxify the bi-products of candida.

### **Probiotics**

Lactobacillus acidophilus and lactobacillus bifidus are beneficial micro-organisms that help to keep candida under control. When in good supply they aid digestion, produce certain vitamins and prevent candida from proliferating. By taking these probiotics as a supplement, the normal balance of friendly bacteria can be restored and thus the candida organism can be kept at bay.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information guide. If you wish to order any of the supplements mentioned, please contact your healthcare practitioner who can prescribe Nutri products specific to your personal requirements.**

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