

# VAGINAL YEAST INFECTIONS

Yeast infections are among the most common types of vaginal infection. A vaginal yeast infection (vulvovaginal candidiasis) is caused by an overgrowth of the yeast organisms that are normal in the vagina.

Overgrowth of the yeast organism can be caused by

- Antibiotics
- Pregnancy
- Diabetes
- Tight-fitting clothing
- Heat
- Moisture
- A number of things that upset the pH balance in a woman's vaginal organisms

Yeast infections are curable; with proper treatment, the infection usually clears in 1 week.

## Symptoms

- Severe itching, redness, and soreness of the vagina
- Vaginal discharge that looks like cottage cheese
- Burning during urination

## Treatment

*Note: Male partners should also be treated if a recurrence occurs within a short period of time, or if he exhibits any symptoms (itching, burning with urination).*

### VAGINAL SUPPOSITORIES

A suppository is inserted into the vagina each evening before bed for 3 to 7 nights, depending on the strength of the suppository. Sanitary pads may be used to protect clothing from the suppository melting.

### VAGINAL CREAM

Cream may be used in place of or in addition to vaginal suppositories. Cream is often used when the external genitalia are red, swollen, and itchy. The cream is applied 2 times per day for 4 to 7 days.

## Prevention

- Using a mild soap, wash and rinse external genitalia regularly.
- Wear clean underwear (cotton is best) every day.
- Avoid vaginal spray deodorants and irritating soaps.
- After using the toilet, always wipe front to back.

- If you feel you must use a douche, use it no more than once per month. The normal vaginal bacteria that keep yeast from infecting the vagina are removed by douching.