



# GEORGIAN BAY WOMEN'S CLINIC

## Yeast Infections: What You Should Know

### What's a Yeast Infection?

A yeast infection, also known as candidiasis, is a common fungal infection that affects the vagina. It's caused by an overgrowth of yeast, usually a type called *Candida albicans*. Yeast infections can cause itching, irritation, and abnormal vaginal discharge.

### What Are the Symptoms?

Symptoms of a yeast infection can vary, but they often include:

- Itching and irritation in the vaginal area
- Redness and swelling of the vulva
- Thick, white vaginal discharge that resembles cottage cheese
- Burning sensation during urination or sex
- Soreness and discomfort in the vaginal area

### How Can You Prevent Them?

**Practice Good Hygiene:** Keep the genital area clean and dry, and avoid using scented products or harsh soaps that can disrupt the natural balance of bacteria and yeast.

**Wear Breathable Clothing:** Choose cotton underwear and avoid tight-fitting clothing that can trap moisture and heat, creating an ideal environment for yeast to thrive.

**Avoid Irritants:** Limit the use of feminine hygiene products, such as douches and sprays, which can disrupt the vaginal pH and increase the risk of yeast infections.

## **How Is It Diagnosed?**

**Self-Diagnosis:** Many people can recognize the symptoms of a yeast infection based on their previous experiences.

**Medical Evaluation:** If you're unsure or if symptoms are severe or recurring, see your healthcare provider for evaluation and diagnosis.

## **How Is It Treated?**

**Antifungal Medications:** Yeast infections are usually treated with over-the-counter or prescription antifungal medications, such as creams, ointments, or suppositories, that are inserted into the vagina.

**Follow Instructions:** Follow the instructions on the medication carefully, and complete the full course of

treatment even if symptoms improve before finishing the medication.

**Avoid Irritants:** During treatment, avoid using products that can irritate the vaginal area, such as scented soaps or douches.

## **Follow-Up**

**Re-Check:** If symptoms persist or recur after treatment, follow up with your healthcare provider for further evaluation and treatment.

**Prevent Recurrence:** Take steps to prevent future yeast infections by practicing good hygiene, wearing breathable clothing, and avoiding irritants.

## **Remember:**

- Yeast infections are common and usually not serious, but they can be uncomfortable and bothersome.
- Most yeast infections can be treated effectively with over-the-counter or prescription antifungal medications.
- If you experience symptoms of a yeast infection or have concerns about your vaginal health, see your healthcare provider for evaluation and treatment.