

## What is Thrush?

Thrush, also known as Candidiasis, is a fungus found in the mouth, genitalia areas, digestive tract and skin. In healthy people, the production of “friendly” bacteria in the system prevents the fungus from causing disease. However, weakened or damaged immune systems may result in the dangerous growth of the ailment-causing fungus. In addition, certain prescription drugs may offset the balance of natural organisms in the body. Such drugs include the extended use of: antibiotics, chemotherapy, AIDS/HIV treatments, antihistamines, steroids and oral contraceptives with a high estrogen content.

Different parts of the body can be afflicted with Thrush: Oral and Esophageal Candidiasis are fungal infections which occur in the mouth and throat, while Candidiasis found in the genital area (it is often sexually transmitted) affects both men and women. Thrush in the mouth looks like creamy white patches or small red spots on the tongue, roof of the mouth, gums or throat. This type of Thrush can be very painful to swallow and can result in chest pain. Oral Candidiasis is found in babies, the elderly, young children, and can also be an early symptom of AIDS. If left untreated in AIDS and HIV patients Oral Candidiasis can become a serious problem, because people with the disease develop the fungus deep within the body—at this stage, treatment becomes difficult. Candidiasis in the genitalia area is commonly referred to as a “yeast infection” and is recognized by a “cottage cheese-like” discharge. Men and young boys may suffer from yeast infections, however; the condition more commonly affects healthy women of all ages, those who are pregnant, and on occasion, it is also an indicator of the AIDS virus in women.

The holistic approach to treating Candidiasis is to administer natural remedies, which heal the human body as a whole organism. Most importantly, the cause itself must be cured so that the symptoms completely disappear. The connection between diet and the health of the immune system is very strong. Notably, sugar, dairy, yeast, wheat, caffeine, nicotine and alcohol are the main culprits in the encouragement of Candidiasis growth. Holistic healthcare practitioners recommend diets high in fiber, essential fatty acids, olive oil, vegetables, fruits, cranberries, and garlic. Many alternative herbal treatments are used to treat Thrush. For instance, gargling with Tea Tree Oil diluted with water often treats Oral Candidiasis. Furthermore, Tea Tree Oil suppositories and douches are often prescribed for Vaginal Candidiasis, as well as the oral administration of Oregon Grape Root, Vitamin C, Lactobacilli Acidophilus, Flax Seed Oil, and Goldenseal. Due to the fact that Genital Candidiasis may be sexually transmitted, holistic healthcare practitioners always recommend the use of condoms and other safe-sex preventative measures.

**Candida Support** [www.candidasupport.org](http://www.candidasupport.org)

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