

Yeast Infections

Talk to your partner(s) about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and your health before you have sex. You can pass on an STI without knowing you have one. During sex, you can use latex condoms to lower your chances of getting STIs.

What is a yeast infection?

Yeast is a fungus that normally lives in small amounts in a woman's vagina. If too much yeast grows, it can cause itching, burning, white discharge and painful intercourse. Yeast infections are very common in women. They can be uncomfortable, but they are not harmful.

How do you get a yeast infection?

You do not have to have sex to get a yeast infection. They can be caused by any of the following:

- * Menstruation
- * Pregnancy
- * Antibiotics
- * Sugar-rich diet
- * Douching
- * Birth Control Pills

How can you tell if you have a yeast infection?

If you have a yeast infection, you might notice

Women

- * Discharge from your vagina that is thick and white.
- * Itching, swelling, or red colour inside and outside your vagina.
- * Pain when you have sex.

Men

- * Itching, rash, swelling, or red colour on the tip of your penis.

How do you prevent a yeast infection?

To prevent a yeast infection, it's a good idea to wear cotton underwear, eat a well balanced diet, and avoid douching.

It is important to use condoms or a latex barrier with sexual partners to decrease the risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection.

How do you get tested for a yeast infection?

A doctor or nurse can test you by looking at the discharge from your vagina or by taking a swab from your vagina. Men are not usually tested for yeast infections, but can be tested if they have symptoms.

How is a yeast infection treated?

If you are not sure if you have a yeast infection, see your health practitioner. Yeast in your vagina is not harmful. You only need to treat a yeast infection if the symptoms are bothering you.

Over the counter medication

You can buy antifungal cream or vaginal suppositories to treat a yeast infection. You can buy them at a drugstore. You do not need a prescription from a doctor. There is also a one dose oral pill, which you can take to clear up the infection. You will need a prescription from your doctor for this.

Do you need a follow up test?

If you feel better, you don't need another test.

If you need further information or would like to book an appointment, call:

Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services for youth ages 13 to 29. 416-927-7171. Health Services offers same-day, scheduled and drop-in appointments. For more information visit www.ppt.on.ca.

Women's Programming at the Bay Centre for Birth Control for women of all ages at 416-351-3700.

Youth can also access information about sexual health by calling the Teen Sex InfoLine at 416-961-3200 or chat live using MSN messenger at spiderbytes@hotmail.com from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and 12 noon to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. You can also email us a question anytime at askus@spiderbytes.ca or visit www.spiderbytes.ca.