Yeast Infections & Vaginal Health

Q: What is a vaginal yeast infection?
A: A vaginal yeast infection is a common condition inside the vagina caused by an overgrowth of yeast (*Candida*) that normally lives in the vagina. This condition is sometimes referred to as "candidiasis". Symptoms from yeast include: burning, itching, or irritation inside the vagina or on the skin outside of the vagina (vulva).

Q: What causes a vaginal yeast infection?
A: A yeast infection (candidiasis) is caused by an overgrowth of yeast that normally lives in the vagina because there is a reduction in the normal bacteria called lactobacillus that live in the vagina. You can get a vaginal yeast infection at any age but it is most common during the childbearing years (16-35). Conditions that disrupt or decrease the normal vaginal bacteria are the trigger to yeast infections, for example taking antibiotics kills the good bacteria in the vagina and then the yeast is able to overgrow. Other conditions that are linked to yeast infections include: pregnancy, diabetes, taking birth control pills or steroids, or having a compromised or weak immune system.

To help reduce the risk of getting a yeast infection, keep the genital area cool and dry by wearing cotton underwear and loose-fitting clothes, change out of wet or damp clothes as soon as possible and change sanitary pads, tampons and panty liners often. Avoid scented hygiene products like scented bubble bath, sprays, pads and tampons.

Q: How can I tell if I have a vaginal yeast infection?
A: When you have a vaginal yeast infection, you may have one or more of the following symptoms: vaginal itching, vaginal discharge that may be thick, white and lumpy like cottage cheese, vaginal soreness, irritation or burning, rash or redness on the skin outside the vagina (vulva), burning upon urination, and painful vaginal intercourse (sex).

Vaginal yeast infections do NOT cause fever, chills, lower abdominal, back or shoulder pain, foul smelling vaginal discharge, or a missed period. These may be signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or a tubal pregnancy. If you have these symptoms, call your doctor right away.

Q: I think I have a yeast infection, but I’m not sure what questions to ask my doctor. Does MONISTAT® have any resources to help aid in the discussion?
A: Yes, on our website we provide a Doctor Discussion Guide to help guide and the conversation and help outline the questions you should be asking your doctor about yeast infections. You can find that guide via this link: [Doctor Discussion Guide](#)

Q: Do I have to go to the doctor?
A: If you are experiencing vaginal itching, discharge and discomfort for the first time you should see a doctor to make the proper diagnosis. Not all that itches is necessarily from a yeast infection. You should see a doctor if any of the following apply:
• If you have lower abdominal, back or shoulder pain, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, or foul-smelling vaginal discharge these conditions are typically not yeast and could signify other more serious conditions.
• Have vaginal yeast infections often (such as once a month or three in six months)
• Could be pregnant, are pregnant or breast feeding
• Have a serious underlying medical cause for your symptoms, including diabetes or a weakened immune system
• Have been exposed to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes AIDS
• Are taking the prescription blood-thinning medicine warfarin (Coumadin)

Stop using the product and consult your doctor if:
• Symptoms do not get better in three days.
• Symptoms last more than seven days.
• You get a rash or hives, abdominal pain, headache, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, foul-smelling vaginal discharge or severe vaginal burning, itching, irritation or swelling.

Q: How can I prevent getting a vaginal yeast infection?
A: Although yeast infections can sometimes be unavoidable, there are several ways that you can help prevent them. To prevent a genital yeast infection:
• Keep the genital area cool and dry by wearing cotton underwear and loose-fitting clothes
• Change out of damp clothes or a wet bathing suit as soon as possible
• Change maxi pads, tampons and panty liners often
• Avoid scented hygiene products like bubble bath, sprays, pads and tampons
• Talk to you doctor about medicines that you are taking to see if they could be triggering an infection; antibiotics especially can destroy the good bacteria in the vagina and cause either yeast or other bacteria to overgrow.

Q: What are different ways to treat a vaginal yeast infection?
A: There are two ways to cure a vaginal yeast infection — vaginally (topically) or orally (systemically). Prescription therapies, both vaginal and systemic, can cure a yeast infection. But, because oral therapies need to be absorbed in the bloodstream, they can take longer to achieve symptom relief. A topical or vaginal treatment like MONISTAT® is applied directly over the site of the infection, and can bring faster results.

Q: Why is vaginal acidity important?
A: The vagina normally has a slightly acidic environment that helps suppress the overgrowth of abnormal bacteria. When abnormal bacteria overgrow or parasitic infections like Trichomoniasis are established, this can result in abnormal vaginal acidity — yeast infections usually do not result in a change in vaginal acidity. To determine any abnormalities in the vagina, the Vaginal Health Test from MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ is a convenient, easy to use vaginal acidity test for use by women who have symptoms that may be associated with vaginal infection.

Q: Are all vaginal infections yeast infections?
A: No, in fact, the most common vaginal infection is bacterial vaginosis (BV), which is an infection caused by an imbalance of bacteria in the vagina. Bacterial vaginosis is distinguished by a fishy odor and a thin, grayish-white discharge and a drop in vaginal acidity. BV is caused by an abnormal growth of bacteria and must be treated with prescription antibiotics. By contrast, yeast infections do not usually cause an
odor, and the discharge will often be thick, white, and lumpy with associated vaginal itching and irritation.
You should see your doctor if you’re experiencing fishy odor, change in discharge, or sudden irritation within 48 hours after a new sex partner to make sure you do not have a sexually transmitted disease or BV.

Another common vaginal infection is Trichomoniasis (Trich), which is a parasitic infection. Symptoms of Trichomoniasis may include the following: itching, burning, redness or soreness of the genitals, discomfort with urination, or a thin discharge with an unusual smell. The discharge can be clear, white, yellowish, or greenish. Like BV, Trichomoniasis must be treated by a healthcare provider.

There are also non-infectious causes of vaginal inflammation and irritation. These are usually caused by an allergic reaction or irritation from vaginal sprays, douches, spermicidal products, soaps, detergents, or fabric softeners. Burning, itching, or vaginal discharge may be present even if there is no infection. To determine any abnormalities in vaginal pH, the Vaginal Health Test from MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ is a convenient, easy to use vaginal acidity test for use by women who have symptoms that may be associated with vaginal infection.

Q: Are BV and trichomoniasis treated the same way as a yeast infection?
A: No. BV is caused by an abnormal growth of bacteria and must be treated with prescription antibiotics. At this time there are no FDA approved OTC treatments for BV.

Trichomoniasis is a parasitic infection and must be treated with prescription antibiotics. At this time there are no FDA approved OTC treatments for Trichomoniasis.

If you think you have a yeast infection and are familiar with the symptoms because you have been previously diagnosed with a yeast infection, you can try an over-the-counter antifungal remedy such as MONISTAT®. If this is your first yeast infection, see your healthcare provider. To determine any abnormalities in vaginal pH, the Vaginal Health Test from MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ is a convenient, easy to use vaginal acidity test for use by women who have symptoms that may be associated with vaginal infection.

For more information visit the CDC website on BV.

For more information visit the CDC website on Trichomoniasis.

Q: If I have vaginal itching, burning, and/or abnormal discharge, and receive a result of abnormal acidity detected, what should I do?
A: You should discuss your symptoms with your healthcare provider to help determine the best treatment for your vaginal discharge and symptoms. Do not self-treat with an antifungal. You can temporarily get itch relief with Instant Itch Relief Cream from MONISTAT COMPLETE CARE™ Instant Itch Relief Cream while waiting to see your doctor.

Q: Can I have more than one type of infection at one time?
A: Yes. In one study 21.1% of the women with presumed yeast infection actually had mixed infection (a combination of yeast or bacterial infection and/or Trichomoniasis).
Q: If I have vaginal itching, burning, and/or abnormal discharge, and normal acidity is detected, what should I do?
A: You may have a yeast infection. If this is your first yeast infection, it is important that you talk to your doctor. However, if you are in good health, have been previously diagnosed with a yeast infection and are familiar with the symptoms, you can try an over-the-counter antifungal remedy such as MONISTAT®. MONISTAT® can begin to relieve symptoms soon after the first dose, with a full cure after several days.

While experiencing these symptoms, you should keep the genital area cool and dry by wearing cotton underwear and loose-fitting clothes. If you are experiencing itching or chafing, you can use Instant Itch Relief Cream from MONISTAT® COMPLETE CARE™, which provides long lasting relief from intense itch by providing a temporary protective barrier around the affected area. You can relieve chafing symptoms with Chafing Relief Powder Gel from MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™, which forms a breathable moisture control barrier to fight friction. This Powder Gel also protects your skin from uncomfortable irritation caused by moisture, heat, friction, and shaving.

A MONISTAT® coupon is available on the MONISTAT® website.

Q: Can pregnancy cause vaginal yeast infections?
A: Women who are pregnant are more likely to get a vaginal yeast infection due to the increase in hormone levels. If you are pregnant and think you have a vaginal yeast infection, talk to your doctor before using any product to treat the infection.

Q: Can I have sex while I am treating a vaginal yeast infection?
A: Do not have vaginal intercourse while using MONISTAT®. Also, do not use tampons, douches, spermicides or other vaginal products. Condoms and diaphragms may be damaged and fail to prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Q: When can I resume having sex after treating my yeast infection?
A: You can resume having sex after seven days if your symptoms have been relieved.

Q: Is it like an STD?
A: Vaginal yeast infections are usually not spread by having intercourse (sex). However, if you have a yeast infection and are having intercourse your partner may also experience some itching or discomfort in the genital area as well. Also increasing the number of sexual partners does increase the chances of vaginal infections by changing the pH of the vagina and allowing yeast and bacteria to overgrow by destroying the good bacteria of the vagina. If your partner has a rash, itching or discomfort in the genital area, a doctor should be contacted to find the cause of the symptoms. The doctor should be informed that you are treating a vaginal yeast infection with MONISTAT®.

Q: Can I use a condom while treating my vaginal yeast infection?
A: Do not have vaginal intercourse while using MONISTAT®. When using MONISTAT® do not use tampons, douches, spermicides or other vaginal products. Condoms and diaphragms may be damaged by MONISTAT® and may fail to prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Q: Can I transfer my vaginal yeast infection to my partner?
A: Some partners may complain of itching, soreness or redness in the genital area from yeast as well. Your partner should contact a doctor to determine the cause of these symptoms because other
infections can cause these symptoms as well. Be sure to have your partner inform the doctor that you are being treated for a yeast infection.

Q: What causes temporary feminine odor?
A: Temporary feminine odor can be caused by perspiration, intercourse, your menstrual cycle, and even the use of some soaps or douches can disturb the natural vaginal balance. If you detect a fishy odor, it may be a common vaginal infection called bacterial vaginosis (BV), BV is an infection caused by an imbalance of bacteria in the vagina. To determine the presence of BV and its treatment, you should see your physician. If you’re not sure, you can determine any abnormalities in vaginal pH with the Vaginal Health Test from MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™. It is a convenient, easy to use vaginal acidity test that can be used by women who have symptoms that may be associated with vaginal infection.

Q: Do antibiotics cause vaginal yeast infections?
A: Antibiotics can destroy the normal flora or good bacteria in the vagina while trying to eliminate the bacteria somewhere else to help treat an infection, thus causing yeast to overgrow. If you are taking antibiotics, do not stop taking them without first asking a doctor and consider discussing your symptoms with them. In the case you do get yeast infection during or after taking antibiotics it is safe to use a MONISTAT® product while taking the antibiotics or after completing them.
Q: What is the difference between MONISTAT® antifungals and other OTC treatments?
A: MONISTAT® antifungal has a long term record of success — it has been in use for the treatment of vaginal yeast infections for over 35 years, first as a prescription and now available over-the-counter, and is the #1 doctor recommended OTC brand. MONISTAT® antifungals have been clinically tested, and their safety and effectiveness have been demonstrated in numerous clinical studies.

Q: Does MONISTAT cure all yeast infections?
A: It’s good to understand that most often, yeast infections result from a type of Candida fungus known as Candida albicans, which accounts for 80-90% of yeast infections. This strain is generally responsive to standard therapy such as MONISTAT® yeast infection treatment products, but other strains exist that are more resistant to common treatment options. These resistant Candida strains, such as Candida Glabrata (commonly seen in uncontrolled diabetics), are less sensitive to antifungal therapies, particularly oral agents, as these need to be absorbed into the bloodstream, as opposed to topical therapies, which are more concentrated in the treatment area. Certain therapies known as non-fluconazole azoles, including MONISTAT® yeast infection treatment products, are still the first line therapy for non-albicans yeast infections based on the CDC recommendation.

Q: Should I use MONISTAT® 1, 3 or 7?
A: It is your preference as to which product you choose. MONISTAT® 1 is a one-day, one-dose product; the medication dose concentration is the highest compared to MONISTAT® 3 and 7. MONISTAT® 3 is a three-day, three-dose product that has a lower concentration of medication per dose. MONISTAT® 7 is a seven-day, seven-dose product that contains the lowest concentration of medication per dose. All three options are similarly effective in curing yeast infections in the same amount of time. It’s important to note that MONISTAT® 1 products will not cure in just one day and may take up to 7 days for you to feel complete relief of symptoms just like the 3 and 7 day options. The higher concentration strength of MONISTAT® 1 may also cause women with sensitive skin more irritation so a lower concentration formula may be better. Examples include postpartum breast feeding and postmenopausal women. If your symptoms do not get better in three days or symptoms last more than seven days, these may be signs that you may have a more serious medical condition so stop the use of the product and contact your doctor.

Q: If my symptoms clear up before I finish the medicine, can I stop treating?
A: No. We recommend our product be used as directed. When using MONISTAT® as directed, you may start to get relief of symptoms in a few hours. It’s important to take all included doses to fully clear the infection. If your symptoms do not get better in three days or symptoms last more than seven days, these may be signs that you may have a more serious condition. If this is the case stop use of the product and contact your doctor.

Q: What should I do if it doesn’t clear up?
A: If your symptoms do not get better in three days or symptoms last more than seven days, these may be signs that you may have a different type of infection and you should contact your doctor.

Q: Should I experience any side effects while using MONISTAT® antifungals?
A: A mild increase in vaginal burning, itching or irritation may occur when you first insert a MONISTAT® antifungal as it starts fighting the infection. Abdominal cramping has also been reported. Stop using
MONISTAT® antifungals and consult your doctor if you have abdominal pain, headache, hives, skin rash or if you have severe vaginal burning, itching, irritation or swelling.

Q: Can I safely use MONISTAT® antifungals if I am pregnant?
A: If you are pregnant and think you have a vaginal yeast infection, talk to your doctor before using any product. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that pregnant women be treated with a 7 day vaginal anti-fungal like MONISTAT® 7 if your doctor confirms you do have a yeast infection.

Q: Can I exercise while taking MONISTAT®?
A: You can exercise while you are taking any of the MONISTAT® products but you may notice some discharge or leakage from the product. The MONISTAT®1 Less Mess OVULE® with DAY or NIGHT® formula may have the least amount of leakage. All other treatments should be taken at night, and you can expect some leakage with product use. For best results, lie down as soon as possible after inserting the product to reduce leakage. You may want to use deodorant-free maxi pads or panty liners to protect your clothing during the time you are using MONISTAT®.

Q: What time of day can I use MONISTAT® yeast infection treatments?
A: You can use MONISTAT® 1 Less Mess OVULE® anytime of the day. MONISTAT® 3, 7, and the MONISTAT® 1-Day Vaginal Ointment should be used at bedtime.

Q: Can I use MONISTAT® while having my period?
A: Yes, MONISTAT® can be used during your menstrual period. In fact, many women get vaginal yeast infections just before their period because of hormone changes. Using MONISTAT® during your period will not affect how well the product works. If you have started treatment and your period occurs, you should complete the full course of treatment. Do not use tampons while using MONISTAT® because tampons may remove some of the drug from the vagina. Use deodorant-free sanitary napkins or pads instead, and change them often.

Q: Does Vagisil® treat vaginal yeast infections?
A: Vagisil® is sold for the temporary relief of external (outside the vagina) itching, but Vagisil® won’t cure the yeast infection. MONISTAT® 1, 3 and 7-day treatments contain an active ingredient that fights yeast and is applied inside the vagina to treat and cure the yeast infection. Most MONISTAT® antifungal products also come with an external itch relief cream for relief of symptoms.

Q: Does eating yogurt help cure a vaginal yeast infection?
A: There is no convincing evidence that eating foods with lactobacillus organisms, bacterial strains found in yogurt or acidophilus milk, will cure a vaginal yeast infection. Although strains of the bacteria found in yogurt have been shown to pass acid in the GI tract and populate the vagina, there is no evidence that proves yogurt reduces or eliminates yeast infections. The Lactobacillus strains have been proven to populate the vagina, however, to treat yeast infections, an anti-fungal agent is necessary.
Additional MONISTAT™ Products

Q: How is MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel unique?
A: Most feminine deodorants only mask the odor with fragrance, they do not eliminate it. Just a small amount of MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel provides long-lasting freshness that lasts for days. It coats the vagina with a specifically-formulated gel that is designed to protect vaginal balance and work with your body to restore feminine freshness.

Q: Is MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel safe?
A: Yes the ingredients in MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel have been clinically tested and shown to be safe. Also, the gel contains no fragrances, parabens, artificial coloring, deodorizers, or drugs of any kind.

Q: Is MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel messy?
A: No. The amount of gel used per application is very small, about the size of a nickel. The gel stays in place once it is applied, so it’s discreet and not messy to use.

Q: Can I take a shower before using the test?
A: Yes. Showering before use will not affect the results; however, make sure you are completely dry before using the test as excess water may affect the test result.

Q: Can I use MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel while I’m having a period?
A: No. MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel should be used three days prior to or immediately after your period for best results.

Q: Can I have intercourse while using MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel?
A: Yes, intercourse is safe while using MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel.

Q: When is the best time to use MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel?
A: You can use it anytime, except during your period.
• After your period
• After sex
• After exercise
• After perspiring
• For freshness anytime

Q: How often can I use MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Stay Fresh Gel?
A: Because it lasts for three days, there is no reason to use it more often. NOTE: Do not use more frequently than once every three days.

Q: How does the MONISTAT COMPLETE CARE™ Vaginal Health Test work?
A: The MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Vagina Health Test is a simple color-changing pH (acidity) test. If the yellow tip comes into contact with vaginal discharge that has an abnormal acidity, the tip’s color will change to either blue or green. The color change creates a stain that is darker and easily observed over the yellow background.
Q: How accurate is the MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Vaginal Health Test for vaginal infections?
A: In a clinical study of pre-menopausal women where the physicians used the test kit, the kit detected 91.8% of cases with an abnormal pH associated with a bacterial vaginosis or Trichomoniasis infection. In 92.9% of cases of no bacterial infection, the kit indicated normal vaginal acidity. In another study where women used the test, there was a 92% agreement between the patient and physician reading of the results.

Q: Why test before you treat?
A: Not all vaginal symptoms are yeast infections; Test if you are unsure. Use this test if you have any of the following symptoms:
- Unpleasant odor
- Abnormal or excessive discharge
- Vaginal itching or burning

Q: Are there any other factors that can affect my results?
A: Yes. Besides infections such as BV and Trichomoniasis, other factors that may affect vaginal acidity (pH) levels include blood, semen, menopause and perimenopause (low estrogen).

Q: How do Probiotics work?
A: The body, including the vagina and urinary tract, contains complex finely balanced ecosystems where beneficial bacteria keep disease-causing organisms in check. When these systems are thrown out of balance, the result can be conditions like urinary tract infections, yeast infections or bacterial vaginosis. Probiotics introduce friendly bacteria into the body. MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants contains a proprietary combination of two probiotic strains, Lactobacillus reuteri, RC-14® and Lactobacillus rhamnosus, GR-1®, which have been clinically shown to help maintain vaginal AND urinary tract health.
*Note: GR-1® and RC-14® are trademarks of Chr. Hansen.

Q: What is MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants?
A: MONISTAT COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants comes in an easily swallowed capsule, designed to be taken daily like a vitamin supplement. MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants combines 2 probiotic strains Lactobacillus rhamnosus, GR-1®, and Lactobacillus reuteri, RC-14®, clinically shown to help maintain vaginal AND urinary tract health. These probiotic strains are different than the probiotic strains found in products to support digestion. The probiotic strains found in MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants were specially selected for feminine health benefits. MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants also includes the antioxidants Vitamin A and vitamin C to help support the immune system.
*Note: GR-1® and RC-14® are trademarks of Chr. Hansen.

Q: Does yogurt offer the same feminine health benefits as MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants?
A: While eating yogurt has certain health benefits, the MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants formula is designed with a proprietary combination of two probiotic strains specifically to promote vaginal and urinary tract health. The ingredients in MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants have been clinically shown to help maintain feminine health.
Q: How long do I have to take MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants to have a benefit?
A: To maintain vaginal health, take one (1) capsule daily. To maintain both vaginal and urinary tract health take two (2) capsules daily. Clinical studies have shown improvement in the presence of beneficial bacteria in 7 days. Regular daily use provides optimum benefits. Vaginal balance can be easily disrupted, so it is important to take MONISTAT™ COMPLETE CARE™ Probiotics plus Antioxidants every day to help maintain feminine health.