

CANDIDA

Candida albicans is a type of yeast which is found in the mouth, throat, stomach, bowel, and vagina. Most of the time the Candida organisms are kept under control by the 'friendly' bacterial flora present in our intestinal tract. In some conditions, however, the Candida organisms can be converted into mycelial yeasts which can penetrate the intestinal walls, enabling toxins such as proteins, alcohols and ammonia to be absorbed from the bowel into the bloodstream with debilitating consequences.

The three main risk factors for yeast related illnesses are:

1. Long term use of the contraceptive pill, HRT, or the contraceptive coil
2. Antibiotics or steroid medication
3. Dysbiosis - when the ecology of the gut micro flora becomes dysfunctional

Candida can become the cause of any of the following symptoms:

Recurrent sore throats, nasal congestion or cough
Bloating, IBS symptoms, constipation/diarrhoea, or both
Cravings for sweet, carbohydrate and yeasty foods
Sensitivity to tobacco smoke or fumes, perfumes etc.
Depression, fatigue, inability to concentrate, poor memory, headaches, explosive temper and irritability, lack of co-ordination, drowsiness, loss of self confidence, crying spells, insomnia
Thrush, athletes foot, skin infections, psoriasis, fluid retentions, endometriosis, period pain, irregular menstrual bleeding, PMT

A balanced wholefood diet is an important factor in the treatment of Candida. The principal objective should be to avoid all Candida friendly foods containing yeast or fungi, as well as sugar-rich and fermented foods.

FOODS TO AVOID

Sugar, dextrose, glucose, maltose or artificial sweeteners, such as aspartame, saccharin, nutrasweet, canderal etc.
Honey, molasses, jams, preserved fruits, fruit juices, canned fizzy drinks
Sweets, cakes, chocolate, etc.
Dairy products: milk, cheese, cream, buttermilk, sour cream (but can have live yoghurt, cottage and ricotta cheese)
Bread, rolls, pitta bread, croissants, doughnuts etc. except soda bread
Stuffing, rusk (in sausages etc) or breadcrumbs
Marmite, Bovril, vegemite, oxo, and most other prepared stocks
Processed meats and fish
Peanuts and pistachios
Alcohol, except gin and vodka
Mushrooms or fungi
Vinegar, pickles, ketchup, chutneys, relishes, salad dressings, horseradish, mint sauce, mustard, HP sauce, soya sauce
Gravy powder
Fruit - avoid for the first month, dried fruits
Malt, malted drinks, malted cereals
Monosodium glutamate (E621), Sodium sulphite (E221) - a preservative, used as a decontaminating agent in fresh orange juice, and during sugar refining
Food supplements - unless advised by practitioner
Anything that may have been fermented
Tea or coffee

FOODS TO INCLUDE

Wholegrain cereals

Soda bread, ryvita crackers (with other crackers check there is no yeast), rice cakes, oat cakes, matzos, some chapattis (check ingredients)

Beef, lamb, pork, poultry, fish, seafood

All vegetables and salads except mushrooms

Almonds, cashews and pecans (so can use nut butters)

Seeds and pulses - ie. Sesame, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, chick peas and lentils

Eggs

Herbal and fruit teas, cereal coffees

Olive oil - contains Oleic acid which has antifungal properties - add to salad as a dressing.

Garlic - sliced finely on cooked vegetables or crushed and added to salads.

Live yoghurt - preferably sheeps' or goats' milk yoghurts

Yeast free bread

Vegetable juices - especially carrot and beetroot.

Fruit - after the first month gradually increase your intake depending on your tolerance.

Fruit

As fruit contains sugars all fruit should be avoided initially, however due to the complex carbohydrates in fruit it is less of a problem and may be reintroduced into the diet after one month.

Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly as they can often be stored for a long period of time and it is not uncommon for yeast spores to be present on the surface.

Antibiotic and steroid residues

Antibiotics and steroid hormones are widely used in the food of commercially farmed animals. As both drugs can exacerbate Candida you should try to ensure any meats, eggs or farmed fish you purchase is organically produced.

SUPPLEMENTS

Caprylic acid - an extract from coconut oil which is a anti-fungal. Start with a low dose and slowly increase

Acidophilus and Bifida bacterium (probiotics) - the friendly intestinal bacteria which helps keep Candida growth at bay.

Biotin - ensure it is from a non yeast source. Research suggests biotin prevents the conversion of Candida to a fungal form. Recommended dosage 500mcg twice daily.

Garlic - anti-fungal and anti-bacterial.

High potency B complex - ensure it is from a non yeast source. Take to improve the immune system.

Vitamin C - take 1 -3g daily. An important antioxidant to strengthen the immune system.

Zinc- 15-50mg daily. Another powerful antioxidant to strengthen the immune system.

Psillium seeds provide a natural source of soluble fibre, help to clean the bowels of surface candida and candida toxins without irritation