

**What is a yeast infection?**

Yeast infections are caused by a fungus called *Candida albicans*. These infections can present in a variety of forms. Yeast infections in women can infect the vagina, called vaginitis. Thrush causes mouth infections in young infants and can also be a presenting sign of HIV infection in adults. *Candida* also may be the cause of many types of diaper rash in young children.

**Who is at risk for a yeast infection?**

Anyone can get a yeast infection.

**What are the symptoms of a yeast infection?**

Candida diaper rash:

- The diaper area is red.
- The redness is worse in the creases.
- Redness is often bordered by red pimples.
- Rash may have a shiny appearance.
- Sores or cracking or oozing is present in severe cases.

Thrush

- White patches appear on the inside of cheeks and gums and tongue.
- Thrush usually causes no other signs or symptoms.

Vaginitis

- Vaginal irritation, intense itchiness and vaginal discharge.

**How soon do symptoms appear?**

Incubation period is unknown.

**How is a yeast infection spread?**

- The fungus is present in the intestinal tract and mucous membranes of healthy people.
- A warm environment allows for growth and spread.

- Person-to-person transmission may occur from a woman to her infant when the mother has a yeast infection in her vagina and in breastfeeding mothers whose babies with thrush infect the mothers' nipples.

### **When and for how long is a person able to spread the disease?**

A person can spread disease as long as the infection is present.

### **How is a person diagnosed?**

A person is diagnosed by the clinical appearance of the rash.

### **What is the treatment?**

See your health-care provider as soon as symptoms appear for treatment options. Prescription medications are available to treat the infection. Some over-the-counter medications are available to treat diaper rash and vaginitis.

### **Does past infection make a person immune?**

No.

### **Should children or others be excluded from child care, school, work or other activities if they have a yeast infection?**

No.

### **What can be done to prevent the spread of yeast infections?**

- Infants and toddlers should not share pacifiers, bottle nipples, teething rings, etc.
- Thoroughly clean contaminated article such as pacifiers, bottle nipples, toys, teething rings, etc., with hot soapy water.
- Wash your hands.
- If breastfeeding, see your health-care provider for treatment.
- Treatment of vaginal yeast infections in pregnant women may prevent the spread to the newborn infant.

### **Additional Information:**

Additional Information is available at [www.ndhealth.gov/disease](http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease) or by calling the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180.

Resource: American Academy of Pediatrics. In: Pickering LK, Baker CJ, Kimberlin DW, Long SS eds. *Red Book: 2015 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2015:[275-280]