



CANDIDIASIS

What is candidiasis and why does it develop?

Candidiasis is a superficial infection of the skin caused by a yeast called *Candida albicans*. This yeast does not normally live on the skin and will not survive on normal dry skin. However, in warm, moist body folds – especially in the armpits, groin, and under the breasts – the infection may develop. Most people with candidiasis have a predisposing factor such as pregnancy, obesity, recent antibiotic therapy, chronic illness, or diabetes.

Candidiasis can occur at any age in both men and women. It is not contagious.

What are the symptoms?

- The rash is bright red and varies from dry and flaky to moist and oozing.
- Itching and burning are common.

How is it treated?

- If the skin is weeping:
 - Apply a cold water compress (use a clean washcloth soaked in cold tap water).
 - Leave the compress on for 10-15 minutes.
 - Use the compress twice daily until the rash is gone.
- Topical creams:
 - Buy miconazole or clotrimazole cream (available without a prescription).
 - Apply a thin layer of the cream twice daily – if you are using a cold water compress, apply the cream after the compress; otherwise, just apply the cream to the rash area.
 - The rash usually disappears after 2 to 3 weeks of treatment. Keep using the cream for another 7 days after the rash is gone.

What can I do to prevent candidiasis?

Since the yeast does not grow on dry, normal skin, you can prevent candidiasis by keeping your skin clean and dry. Follow the simple suggestions:

- Use a blow dryer on a low setting to dry the body-fold areas after bathing.
- Sprinkle a drying powder such as Zeasorb-AF on these areas.
- If possible, wear loose-fitting clothes.
- Weight loss may be beneficial.