

Genital Candida

SOAIDS



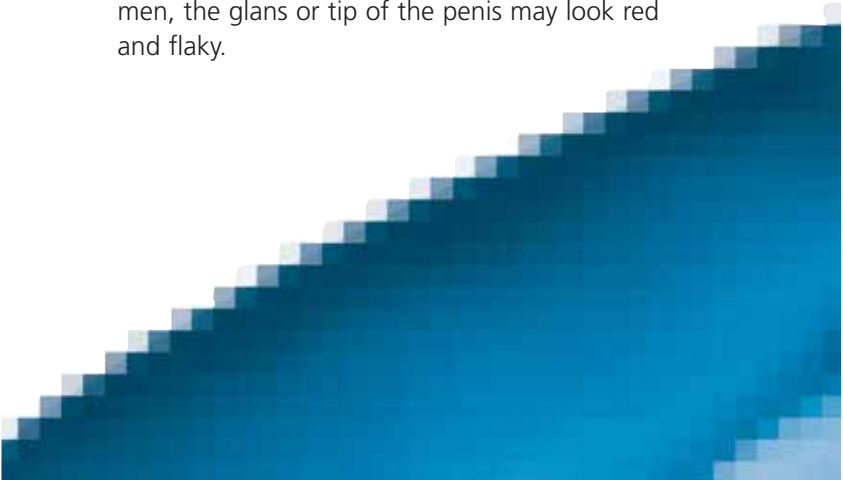
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Genital Candida

A Candida infection (candidiasis) is not an STI (sexually transmitted infection), but is caused by overgrowth of what is basically a harmless yeast. Many people have it without even noticing. In certain circumstances, however, symptoms can suddenly occur due to an increase in the amount of yeast. It is particularly common in women. Yeast overgrowth can occur for example if your resistance is lowered by certain medicines (e.g. prednisone) or an HIV infection, diabetes or use of certain antibiotics. A Candida infection is often called a fungal infection. It's almost never caused by sexual contact. However, you can pass on the yeast by sexual contact. It is not a serious infection and usually responds well to treatment. It can, however, cause considerable discomfort (itching) and (often) recur. Candida overgrowth can occur in the mucous membranes of the genitals, mouth and rectum and on the skin, particularly in the folds (intertrigo).

Symptoms in men and women

A Candida infection often causes no symptoms. Men usually have no symptoms at all. In women, Candida overgrowth can cause more vaginal discharge than normal. This discharge may resemble cottage cheese curds. The area around the vagina may be red and there is often severe itching. In men, the glans or tip of the penis may look red and flaky.



Tests

To diagnose a Candida infection, the doctor will do a swab test and/or a culture. Vaginal discharge is usually immediately examined under the microscope.

Treatment

Candida responds well to treatment. In some cases, however, the infection is persistent and keeps recurring. Treatment is only necessary if there are symptoms. A cream is usually prescribed for use in the vagina or on the penis. Women can also use vaginal tablets. Sometimes capsules are prescribed for oral use. Soap can have a detrimental effect on the pH level in the vagina. This can give Candida the chance to grow excessively. It is therefore better to wash the vagina with water only. Lactacyd can be used preventively or to suppress an infection that is just starting. This product can be purchased from the pharmacy or drugstore. Treatment of your partner(s) is only necessary if symptoms are present.

During treatment, it is better to abstain from sex. This gives your body the chance to recover.



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This is a publication of Soa Aids Nederland and is sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline. This leaflet forms part of the brochure 'STI, prevention-testing-treatment'. Read both the leaflet and the brochure carefully to obtain maximum information. For further information about STI and safe sex, call the AIDS STI Infoline 24 hours a day (0900 204 2040 or infolijn@aidsfonds.nl).

You can also visit our site: www.soaids.nl

