

Say aaah! yeast infection in the mouth

It's called oral thrush. When the mouth develops an infection in the mucous membranes, there can be a number of reasons behind it. It can be caused by fungus, by bacteria, or by a disease. One of the more probable causes of mouth infection is the fungus *Candida albicans*. The yeast infection in the mouth of babies is commonly called thrush while those that occurred in the mouth and throat of adults are referred to as candidiasis or moniliasis.

*Candida* which is also known as *Monilia* (hence moniliasis) is a naturally occurring fungi that looks like yeast. It is normal to find *Candida* in small amounts in the digestive track as well as in the vaginal tracks of women. You might have heard of yeast infections in women, this is the same *Candida* that causes the yeast infections in the mouth. Commonly, the infection begins when the *Candida* which should normally be in just small quantities start growing rapidly. The fungi then infect the mouth and throat by targeting the tissues or by producing some toxins which causes some burning and quite painful sensations.

A number of reasons can trigger the infection of *Candida* in the mouth and throat areas. One of these is taking antibiotics. Drug treatments like chemotherapy also make the body more susceptible to yeast infections. These drugs make the environment more favorable for *Candida* growth. The other microorganism that keeps the yeast in place is reduced due to the effects of the drugs allowing an overgrowth of the *Candida* fungi.

Diabetes, malnutrition, drug abuse and a compromised immune system can also induce changes which make *Candida* growth more favorable. This is why babies and people with advanced age are more likely to develop oral yeast infections. Their immune system is still not that strong to withstand any small change in their environment.

Also, it has been found out that people with dentures that don't fit well are more likely to develop yeast infection in the mouth than those with perfectly fitted dentures. Dentures that don't fit well might damage the mucous membranes in the mouth. The damaged areas may serve as a doorway for the *Candida* fungi to invade the tissues.

Oral yeast infections have been observed to have discharges that vary from white to cream-coloured. At times, yellow spots in the mouth are also good indications that yeast has already grown considerable and began infecting the mucous membranes of the mouth. This can become unbearable to adults since oral yeast infections come with burning sensation in the mouth and throat.

In treating the infection, the cause of the problem needs to be addressed. If

dentures appear to be the trigger, then replacing them would be the first step. A compromised immune system, however, might be a little tricky. But doctors will find a way around it.

Treatment does not stop there. You will be directed to take antifungal drugs to help eliminate the fungi from your mouth and throat. Most often, the antifungal drugs used for treating oral yeast problems come in the form of pastilles. By sucking on the pastilles, the antifungal medicine acts on the infection directly.

Firstly, the condition that caused the thrush must be brought under control. This might involve investing in new and better fitting dentures, or adjusting diabetes treatment. For AIDS patients, it is not always possible to correct the immune deficiency, and a course of oral treatment using antifungal drugs has to be used.

There are cases, however, that the infection has become severe that antifungal pastilles are no longer effective. There are other treatment options for yeast infection in the mouth at your disposal. So, don't worry, I'm sure your doctor will guide you all the way.