DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Thrush

Thrush is a type of fungal infection most commonly found in infants and children. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate the condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here’s what they mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bacteria</strong></td>
<td>Good and bad bacteria are found in the mouth and the gut. To prevent thrush, it is important to practice good oral hygiene which can also impact your gut health. Preventing overgrowth of bad bacteria can help to prevent thrush.</td>
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<td><strong>Yeast</strong></td>
<td>Microscopic fungi that are capable of converting sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide. Yeast is used as a leavening agent when baking and is a common ingredient in foods such as, breads, baked goods, cereals, beer, and fermented foods, to name a few. A diet that is high in yeast can promote thrush.</td>
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<td><strong>Candida (C. albicans)</strong></td>
<td>There are over 20 species of Candida yeasts that can cause infection in humans, the most common of which is Candida albicans. Candida yeasts normally reside in the intestinal tract and can be found on mucous membranes and skin without causing infection. However, overgrowth of these organisms can cause symptoms to develop.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yeast Infection</strong></td>
<td>Most yeast infections are caused by the organism Candida albicans. Yeast infections can occur in the genital areas and the oral cavity.</td>
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<td><strong>Fungal Infection</strong></td>
<td>An inflammatory condition caused by a fungus.</td>
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<td><strong>Cutaneous Candidiasis</strong></td>
<td>An infection of the skin and nails caused by the Candida fungus.</td>
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<td><strong>Gut Dysbiosis</strong></td>
<td>A state in which there is an imbalance of microorganisms on or within our bodies. Gut dysbiosis refers to when there is an imbalance of the microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungus in our intestines.</td>
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Questions to Ask
These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage thrush.

About Symptoms

- My child has these white dots on the roof of his mouth and gums, is this thrush?
- I noticed that my child has difficulty eating and drinking—could this be a symptom?
- What about cracks on the side of the mouth?
- My child complains of mouth dryness often and eats a diet high in sugar, could she have thrush?
- When changing my child’s diaper I noticed redness in the genital area that seems to burn. It doesn’t appear to be a diaper rash, could it be thrush?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- I read that thrush is caused by overexposure to yeast. Is this true?
- Are there any other causes of thrush?
- Does diabetes increase my risk of developing thrush?
- Do all young children get it at some point, or are some kids more likely to get it?
- Does eating too much sugar cause thrush?
- Is it true that if thrush gets really bad, it can spread to your esophagus?
- My mother is going through chemo for cancer and her immune system is weakened, could this cause thrush?
- Can certain types of medications cause thrush?

About Diagnosis

- If I’m nursing my baby and I have thrush, can I pass it to them?
- Is thrush contagious? For example, if I share food with my child while I have it, can they get it too?
- Do I need to have tests to confirm thrush, or can my doctor just tell by looking at it?
- Do I need to see a special doctor for a diagnosis?
About Treatment

- What types of medications are recommended for treating thrush?
- How long does it take for thrush to go away once I treat it?

About Coping

- The lesions in my mouth are super painful, is there anything I can put on them to numb the pain?

About Living With Thrush

- If I quit smoking, will that help to prevent thrush?
- Someone told me that improperly fitting dentures can cause thrush, should I have my father's checked?
- Are there certain types of foods I should avoid when I have thrush?
- Are there certain foods that will irritate the lesions?
- Is there anything I can eat to help make the thrush go away?
- Can good dental hygiene help me from getting thrush?
- Will taking a probiotic help?