

Appendix 3: Candida Yeast Overgrowth

By Becca Chambers

Candida albicans yeast is an opportunistic parasite that takes advantage of a weakened immune system and an empty ecological niche to colonize and multiply in the large intestines of our digestive systems. Our American lifestyle unfortunately often leads to the development of a perfect environment for yeast to grow. Poor nutrition weakens our immune systems and feeds the yeast with sugar. The ubiquitous use of antibiotics kills the beneficial bacteria in your gut leaving an empty ecological niche with no competitors for space and food. And common exposure to serious toxins and contaminants, such as the heavy metal mercury (high levels are found in certain seafood) further weakens our immune systems and bodies leaving us particularly susceptible to an overgrowth of this common intestinal flora. A very small amount of Candida is normal and healthy, however many Americans now have vastly more yeast in their gut than is ideal. This is why we are seeing the proliferation of ads on TV for yogurts and other products with beneficial bacteria, and why many people find relief with these products.

The yeast in your gut produces toxins itself which travel throughout the body causing a vast array of problems, including but not limited to digestive problems (constipation, diarrhea, gas, bloating, cramping, heartburn, nausea), increased immune system stress leading to allergies and other immune dysfunction, and to nervous system problems such as depression and anxiety, sugar and carbohydrate cravings, irritability, headaches, and poor memory. Yeast overgrowth is associated with many immune system disturbances and weaknesses such as fungal overgrowths (such as athlete's foot and skin rashes), respiratory problems such as asthma, hay fever, food allergies and intolerances, frequent colds and flu, vaginal and urinary tract infections, to name a few.

Many other chronic health problems can also be aggravated by yeast overgrowth as the yeast increases inflammation levels in general, and inflammation is linked to almost all chronic health issues. So, often joint pain will improve, and I have even on occasion seen problems such as diabetes and high cholesterol improve with yeast control, and it is very helpful for losing weight. Yeast somehow seems to cause powerful sugar and carbohydrate cravings which then further feed the yeast. Controlling yeast overgrowth often reduces sugar and carb cravings improving long-term weight loss outcomes. Yeast also usually causes water retention and bloating so there are usually rapid initial weight and inches lost.

Happily it is entirely possible to safely, quickly, and inexpensively address this issue. With a combination of some diet changes and a few mild natural supplements one can rapidly kill off huge amounts of yeast which will provide almost instant and amazing relief (although one problem, constipation, is likely to get worse initially as an irritated colon calms down). In fact the surest way to tell whether a yeast overgrowth is affecting you is to try an anti-yeast program for one week and see what happens. Doctors can administer tests, but the results of these tests can be misleading, and most doctors, if they are aware of Candida yeast as a common problem, do not understand the range of effects.

When Western medicine does recognize this problem, the usual recommendation is powerful anti-fungal drugs. I do not recommend this approach under most circumstances. The drugs will kill the yeast but they will also weaken your overall

health and body, leaving you even more susceptible in the future, and the yeast will likely soon reappear. Yeast is much like weeds in a garden—it always comes back, unless the gardener (your immune system) is healthy and strong and pulling up weeds all the time. Also it is important in the “garden” of your gut to have lots of the “good” plants (beneficial bacteria) to crowd out the yeast (this is the major reason why the yogurts with healthy bacteria are so helpful).

I recommend a gentle, non-toxic natural anti-fungal product such as garlic or grapefruit seed extract, probiotics (the good bacteria), along with some diet modifications. If you change your diet, you will get much more powerful and dramatic results; and if you do not change a poor diet, it will be much more difficult to ever truly get better. The most important long term goal for controlling yeast is to strengthen your immune system, so healthy eating, and other health promoting lifestyle changes are critical. For this reason whole body vibration (WBV, Appendix 1), nutrient supplementation, and homeopathy can be critical.

The basics of an anti-yeast diet is to eliminate or cut back on the sugar that feeds yeast, and to stop ingesting more yeast, or foods containing yeast type organisms, (anything in the fungal family including all molds, yeasts, and mushrooms). See the following bibliography for several excellent reference books which will explain the whole situation and diet in much greater detail. Basically the diet is a very healthy relatively low carb diet with all the attendant benefits of that type of diet as well as its yeast modifying aspects. It is quite difficult to do a strict anti-yeast diet (especially when you are not used to it) but it is not necessary for most people and situations, especially if you also incorporate other health promoting changes in your program, ideally WBV and nutrient supplementation.

For people with severe yeast issues, it is often possible, if you wish, to create a situation where you will not be able to go back to eating “off the diet” without possibly rapidly becoming ill. For people with major weight problems this can be a blessing. The more overweight a person is the more likely they are to have a significant yeast problem, which typically will be causing the person to crave more carbs. The more yeast a person has when they start an anti-yeast program, the greater the effect will be from killing off the yeast. If this person follows a strict program of diet changes, a natural anti-yeast product, and probiotics, for just 5 days, they will usually experience a huge drop off in all kinds of symptoms, and very often a large initial water weight loss. When I first tried this I had a severe overgrowth of yeast and I weighed 200 lbs. I lost 20 lbs in one week while still consuming a normal amount of daily calories and plenty of fluids (clearly water loss), and my symptoms decreased dramatically.

After 5 days of clearing yeast from your body you will likely then become hyper-reactive to any amount of yeast (or any yeast type organisms) introduced to your body. Your immune system is primed to attack these organisms, so if you do go off the diet, yeast levels will suddenly increase and your immune system will mount a counter attack. The combined effect of more yeast with its attendant toxins, and an immune system war erupting may result in a sudden worsening of any affected system, especially likely being the digestive system, nervous and immune systems.

This can be good! You will be now carrying around with you, at all times, a large “carrot” and a large “stick.” As long as you remain on the program, you will feel much better, but if you go off the wagon, you may get violently ill. This is perfect for the person without much will power! You don’t need will power, just a desire not to be painfully ill. That is how I personally lost 75 lbs. and it is part of how I have kept it off for the last 25 years.

You do not have to follow a yeast program forever though by any means. Your body will tell you when your immune system can effectively stop yeast growing in your gut, which is the normal healthy way to control yeast. A healthy body and immune system can do this without difficulty. It is only when an immune system is weakened that the yeast overgrows. When you can tolerate sweets, and yeast or fungus (mushrooms, molds...) containing foods without symptoms then you have healed. But beware of relapsing! If you begin to feel ill again, the yeast may have returned and you may have to resume your anti-yeast program.

There is one important exception to the avoidance of sugar. Fruit juice on an empty stomach (half an hour before food and two hours after food) will not feed yeast (unless you have a very severe case) as the sugar will be rapidly absorbed in the small intestine, before it gets to the large intestine, which is where the yeast lives. In fact, it is therefore highly recommended (by Dr. DeOrio, who discovered this, and by myself) to drink lots of juice, *on an empty stomach only*, as you will then still be getting all the important nutrients found in fruits which will help you to heal.

A couple of other important points are that if your health is poor and there are any serious potential health issues, you do need to be careful with this type of program. It is very powerful, and you could become dangerously ill if you break the program, (and everybody does break the program eventually whether by design or mistake as it is very difficult to avoid all sugar and yeast type products). In the case where a person has significant health issues they should ease into decreasing yeast levels gradually, i.e. continue to eat some healthy sugars (such as fruit) regularly. Also you should consult with a natural health doctor, and/or your regular doctor, before starting.

Finally, be aware that during the initial five days of a hard core program, or longer if you are approaching things gradually, you may actually feel worse as the dying yeast will be releasing its stored toxins into your body. If you feel in any way worse during the initial days though, that is a good sign! It means that the program is working and you are even more likely to feel much better in just a few short days.

You might be wondering if this is really such an important issue why you haven't heard about it before now—the inevitable power and influence of money. The pharmaceutical industry funds most medical research and the last thing pharmaceutical companies are interested in is a health problem that can best be solved without drugs, and the solving of which leads to less drug use in general.