The Everyday Effects of Recurrent Vulvovaginal Candidiasis (Chronic Yeast Infection)

A vaginal yeast infection is a common disorder caused by an overgrowth of a fungus called Candida.

A small percentage of women will have recurrent vulvovaginal candidiasis (RVVC), commonly known as chronic yeast infection, which is a different condition from VVC and defined as 3 or more episodes of yeast infection in 12 months. The symptoms can be extremely uncomfortable and can affect every aspect of life.

75% of women will get a vaginal yeast infection— also known as vulvovaginal candidiasis (VVC) — in their lifetimes, and many women will experience 2 or more.

If you think you have RVVC, consult with your healthcare provider about diagnosis and treatment. Although there are no FDA-approved treatments for RVVC, these tips may reduce your symptoms and discomfort.

Diet
Foods with simple sugars can all increase the risk of a yeast infection.
- fruit
- white flour
- dairy products
- fermented food with yeast, such as beer, wine and kombucha

Instead try some yogurt with live cultures of the “friendly” bacteria, Lactobacillus acidophilus.

Clothing
- Keep your crotch area cool and dry, so choose cotton fabrics, avoid tight-fitting clothing such as leggings or tights, and sleep without underwear to discourage yeast growth.

Exercise
- Promote a healthy immune system by getting regular exercise but remember that yeast thrives in moist environments, so don’t sit around in a wet bathing suit or sweaty workout clothes.

Hygiene
- Keep your vagina clean and be sure to dry off completely after bathing, showering or swimming. Avoid perfumed products, including toilet paper and sanitary products.

Did you know?
- A yeast infection is not a sexually transmitted infection, but there is a small chance that sexual partners can infect one another. Condoms can reduce the risk of passing yeast back and forth but can also trigger a yeast infection.

Sex
- A yeast infection can cause pain during sex, so you may want to avoid sexual activity during a flare-up.

The daily impacts of RVVC

Work
- RVVC can make exercising uncomfortable
- You may have to spend time and energy figuring out what you can and can’t eat

Exercise
- RVVC can make exercising uncomfortable
- Going to doctor’s appointments can eat into time you could be doing other things

Finances
- Doctor’s appointments and treatments cost money

Did you know?
- Vaginal douching with feminine products can kill off the good bacteria that control fungus. Stick to mild soap and water.

Relaxation
- Before you get ready to watch your favorite movie or TV show, take a shower and change into loose-fitting cotton clothing.

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