

CONTROLLING CANDIDA

Candida albicans is a normally harmless yeast, naturally present in the intestinal tract in balance with all other bacterial flora. Problems arise during periods of prolonged stress or lowered immunity, particularly caused by chronic antibiotic use, when Candida can proliferate to the point of infestation, changing from its benign yeast form to an invasive fungal form.

Candidiasis is the name given to the condition resulting from the over-proliferation of Candida albicans. The symptoms of Candidiasis include the following:

- Digestive problems such as gas, bloating, indigestion, alternative diarrhoea & constipation, heartburn and weight fluctuations (usually gaining weight)
- Genitourinary disorders such as thrush, vaginal itching and discomfort, kidney & bladder infections, menstrual irregularities and PMT
- Fungal skin disorders, acne, hives, localized itching in ears and anus
- Cravings for sugar, yeast, alcohol and white bread
- Headaches and fatigue

Treatment of Candidiasis involves dietary changes that will need to be maintained for 3-6 months. Supplementation with Lactobacillus acidophilus is an essential part of treatment, and your Naturopath may advise other herbs, homeopathics or vitamin supplements as required on an individual basis.

Overall, the diet must be free of all yeast/mold containing products and sugar in all forms, with limited intake of dairy produce and red meat. If any stomach pain is present, limit or remove all wheat produce for at least 1 month.

Food To Avoid

YEAST & MOLDS: Below are listed some common foods containing yeast and mold. For further information, ask your Naturopath for a Yeast-Free Diet Sheet, and remember to thoroughly check all food labels for yeast/mold content.

- all foods containing yeast extract -- examples: Vegemite, Promite, Marmite, stock cubes, packet soups
- all raised doughs -- breads, buns, rolls, cracker biscuits, foccacia, muffins and crumpets
- all fermented drinks --- beer, wine, champagne, spirits, ginger-beers, cider, stout
- all cheese, sour cream, sour milk, buttermilk, 3-4 day old milk
- all dried fruits -- apricots, dates, prunes, figs (organic)
- canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato puree, tomato paste
- vinegars, soya sauce
- fermented, aged or smoked foods including pickled and smoked meats and fish, frankfurter's, salami, sausages, etc.
- mushrooms and peanuts

- "leftovers" == foods leftover and reheated usually grow mold, particularly meat products.

SUGAR Check food labels carefully for hidden sugar content. Sugar may be listed as sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, lactose, dextrose and galactose.

- sugars of all kinds -- white, brown and raw sugar, honey and maple syrup
- chocolate, cakes, biscuits, sweets
- fruit juice

DAIRY: Dairy products are high in natural sugars and should be avoided.

Alternative Food Choices

Eat freshly prepared , natural whole foods whenever possible. Supermarkets and health foods shops also carry a wide range of yeast and sugar free products. Remember to always read food labels carefully.

- all fresh fruits (with no visible mold) [except rockmelon] Limit fruit to 1 small piece per daily.
- all fresh vegetables)with no visible mold) [except mushrooms]

brown rice, millet, buckwheat, oats.

- unyeasted breads and biscuits such as crispbread; rice cakes; millet, buckwheat, rye and sour-dough breads.
- free range eggs
- fresh meat, chicken and fish (buy fresh daily or freeze promptly -- freezing retards growth of mold).

Limit red meat to 2 serves weekly.

- homemade soups
- fresh herbs for flavouring
- fresh tomatoes
- lentils, chick peas, sprouts
- rice milk, soya milk, goats milk
- good quality, natural yoghurt without added sugar or fruit
- rice, corn or vegetable pastas
- tamari (yeast free soya sauces)

Drink a minimum of 6-8 glasses of filtered water per day

Helpful Ideas

One main reason that food begins to spoil is that it becomes contaminated with mold. Other foods such as cheese actually contain mold as part of their flavoring.

To avoid mold in food:

- peel all root vegetables and fresh fruit before eating
- fresh or frozen fruits are preferred (rather than dried)
- avoid stews and casseroles that have been refrigerated for over 48 hours

- use only very fresh (or frozen) meat
- discard any food that is obviously spoiled by mould (i.e. mold is visible) especially over-ripe melons and fruits

Candida Die-Off Symptoms

As your body is detoxifying, it is possible to experience the following symptoms

- headache, fatigue
- irritability, mood swings
- increase in body odor
- bloating
- diarrhea
- increase in sugar cravings

YES AND NO FOODS

Bakery

FORBIDDEN FOODS

Commercial breads and biscuits with wheat. Oats (for the first three weeks). Commercial muffins, cakes and pastries. Wheat or semolina-based pasta. All foods containing yeast.

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

Brown Rice, corn, buckwheat, millet. Brown Rice or corn crackers. Puffed millet and rice flake cereal. Brown Rice, corn, millet or buckwheat pasta.

Beverages

FORBIDDEN FOODS

Alcohol, fruit juice, soft drink, cordials, tea, coffee, dairy milk. Soy milk with malt or sugar.

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

Pau D'arco tea, red clover tea, dandelion tea. Filtered water with a squeeze of lemon juice. Add garlic or herbs if desired.

Condiments, oils and spreads

FORBIDDEN FOODS

Sugar, artificial sweeteners, malt, honey, fructose, lactose. Vinegar, salt, pepper, soy sauce, mayonnaise, tamari, shoyu, Worcestershire sauce, etc. Margarine, butter and all commercial spreads -- vegemite, jam

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

Make your own dressing with cold pressed linseed oil or olive oil and lemon juice. Add garlic or herbs if desired. Use tahini or avocado as a spread. Homemade hummus - cooked chickpeas, blended with garlic, lemon juice and tahini.

Dairy Products

FORBIDDEN FOODS

All forbidden, as they contain milk sugar. Ice cream, cheese, milk, yoghurt, cream, butter, milk powders, whey, buttermilk.

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

Allowed soy milk with no added sugar malt.

Fruit

FORBIDDEN FOODS

All forbidden for the first 4 weeks. Fruit contains sugar, and Candida will survive with even a small amount of sugar.

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

Can have lean beef, skinless chicken, lamb and fresh fish. Try to obtain all meat as organic/free range as possible.

Nuts and Seeds

FORBIDDEN FOODS

Avoid peanuts, coconut, old nuts and seeds.

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

Fresh nuts and seeds.

Vegetables

FORBIDDEN FOODS

Avoid for the first three weeks: sweet corn, sweet potato, potato, beans, squash, carrots and beats. You can eat all of these after week three. Avoid mushrooms and other fungi. Avoid fermented foods, including tofu, miso and tempeh.

ALTERNATIVES ALLOWED

All other fresh vegetables.

These are all positive signs that show excess bacteria is being discharged from the system. The symptoms will pass in a few days. The benefits of the Candida control diet will include greater energy, mental clarity and relief of previous symptoms.