

Thrush

This is a colloquial term used in English for a whole series of **fungal infections**. The article deals with the most common **yeast infection** caused by the *Candida albicans* fungus, which affects approximately 75 percent of women at least once.

Symptoms include an **itching and burning sensation** around the vagina and vulva, white **vaginal discharge** with the consistency of **cottage-cheese**, and a **stinging** sensation when urinating. The presence of **lactic acid bacteria** in and around the vaginal area helps **to keep** this naturally occurring fungus **in check**. So, thrush is generally caused by an imbalance of the vaginal flora.

Pharmacy customer: Hello, it's, well... I eh have thrush.
I'm sorry, I have never heard of thrush?

Another term is Candida.

Oh, I understand, you mean a **yeast infection!** Is it in your mouth?

I'm afraid not.

Oh, I see. If you like I can try and advise you here in our back office.

Oh, that is very kind. It's so embarrassing.

How are you sure that you have thrush? Have you had it before?

I've had it on and off for several years now. I was hoping that you could recommend over-the-counter products to help.

Yes, we have several products that are excellent in treating yeast infections, but I have to ask you one or two questions before I can recommend anything.

That's okay, go ahead.

Are you **pregnant?**

No, and I'm not breast feeding either.

Good. Do you have any lower abdominal pain such as cramps?

No, I don't.

What consistency does the discharge have?

It's a bit like cottage cheese.

Okay. So, what do you think might have caused this? You see, the vaginal flora is often damaged through **over-exaggerated** intimate hygiene such as **douching** and using "hygiene" products that kill off the lactic acid bacteria. Wearing synthetic under-

wear too often, which causes the area to sweat and stay **moist**, provides an ideal **breeding ground** for yeasts: warm, moist and dark.

I think it's because I had to take a course of antibiotics to help treat a stubborn bout of sinusitis. I took the last antibiotic a week ago.

When was the last time that you had an infection?

As far as I remember it was about two years ago.

And the discharge hasn't changed, **otherwise** you'd have to go to a GP or gynaecologist, as a strong-smelling discharge would indicate a bacterial infection.

Do you have those special tablets called vaginal pessaries, also called suppositories?

Yes, we do and they are very effective in combination with this cream which you should apply to the affected area. The treatment should be carried out at least three days, to make sure that the vaginal flora has a chance to recover.

I'll do that. Thank you for your patience and understanding, you've been a great help. Goodbye.

No problem, bye. ■

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VOCABULARY

thrush	(umgangssprachl.) Pilzkrankheit
fungal infections	Pilzkrankungen
yeast infection	Kandidose, Pilzinfektion
itching and burning sensation	juckende und brennende Empfindung
vaginal discharge	Scheidenausfluss
cottage-cheese	Hüttenkäse, körniger Frischkäse
stinging	stechend
lactic acid bacteria	Milchsäurebakterien
to keep something in check	etwas im Zaum halten, bzw. in Schach halten
embarrassing	peinlich
pregnant	schwanger
breast feeding	Stillen
over-exaggerated	übertrieben
douching	(hier) Scheidenspülung
moist	feucht
breeding ground	Brutstätte, Nährboden
stubborn bout	hartnäckiger Anfall
otherwise	ansonsten
vaginal pessaries/ suppositories	Vaginalzäpfchen