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RECURRENT YEAST INFECTIONS

Recurrent yeast infections of the vagina are defined by having at least 4 documented yeast infections in a 12 month period. Documentation of a yeast infection is performed by microscopic examination of the vaginal secretions and/or a positive vaginal culture for yeast. Recurrent yeast infections are estimated to occur in 5-8 % of women during their reproductive years. It affects healthy women of all strata of society, and the majority have no recognizable risk factors. Yeast infections do not occur in women after menopause that are not on estrogen therapy.

A safe and convenient treatment is available for patients with recurrent yeast. The initial treatment regimen is 3 doses of Diflucan 150 mg given at 72-hour intervals, followed by a weekly dose of Diflucan 150 mg for 6 months. This regimen has been shown to reduce the frequency of recurrent vulvovaginal by more than 90 percent. At the end of the 6 month treatment period, 46 percent of patients who had followed this regimen remained disease free for an additional 6 months, compared to only 20 % in the placebo group. Side effects are rare, but may include headache, rash, nausea, vomiting, musculoskeletal disorders, and central nervous system disorders.

Additional measures to decrease yeast infection recurrences include:

Wear only all cotton underwear and do not wear thong underwear. Do not put fabric softener in the dryer with your underwear. Do not wear underwear when you sleep.

Avoid perfumed soaps and any bubble bath. Use toilet paper without perfumes or dyes.

Avoid tight fitting clothes. Change out of wet bathing suits and exercise clothes as soon as possible.

Avoid foods and drinks with refined sugars. Try to eat yogurt daily.